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THE NEW YORKER

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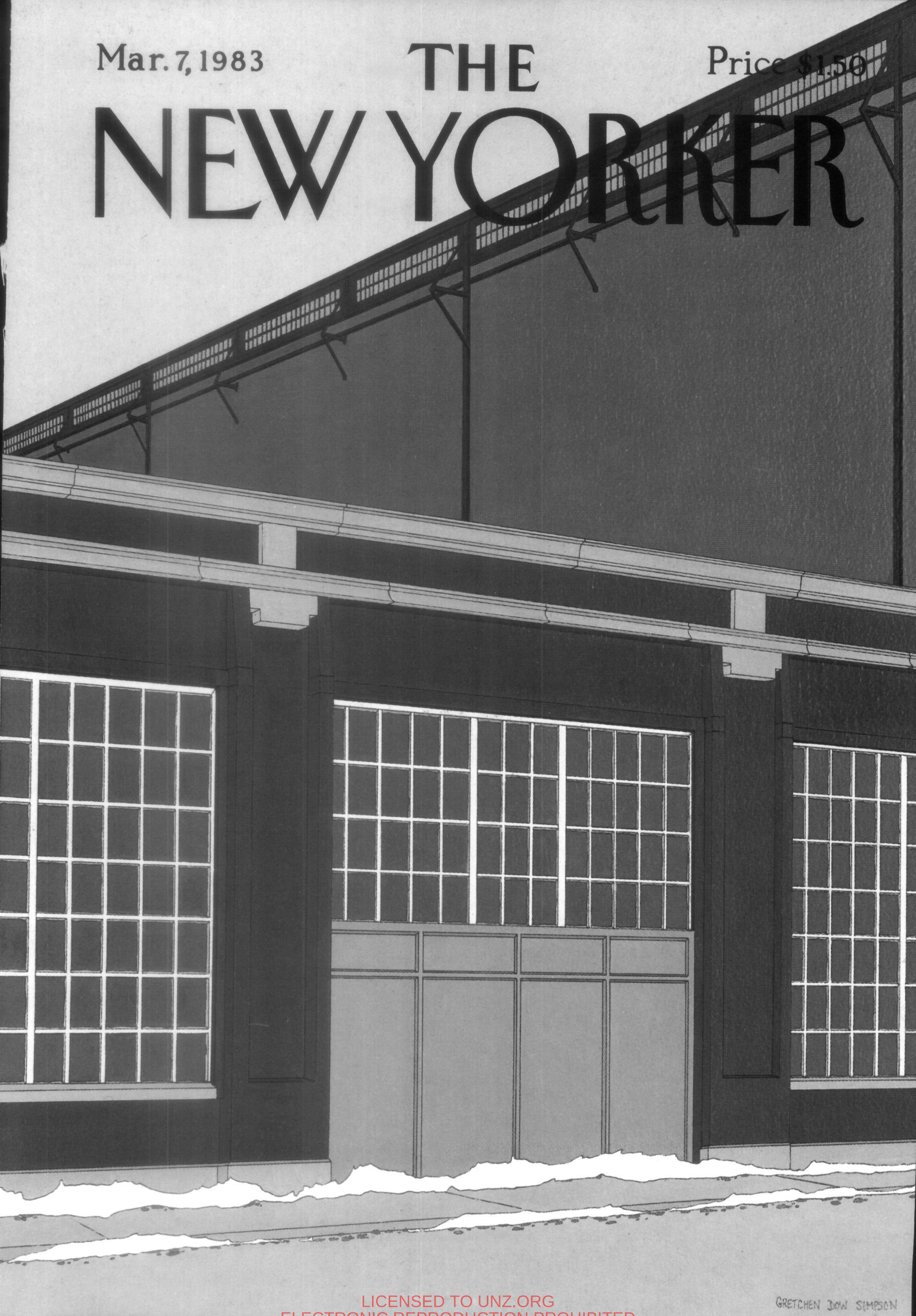
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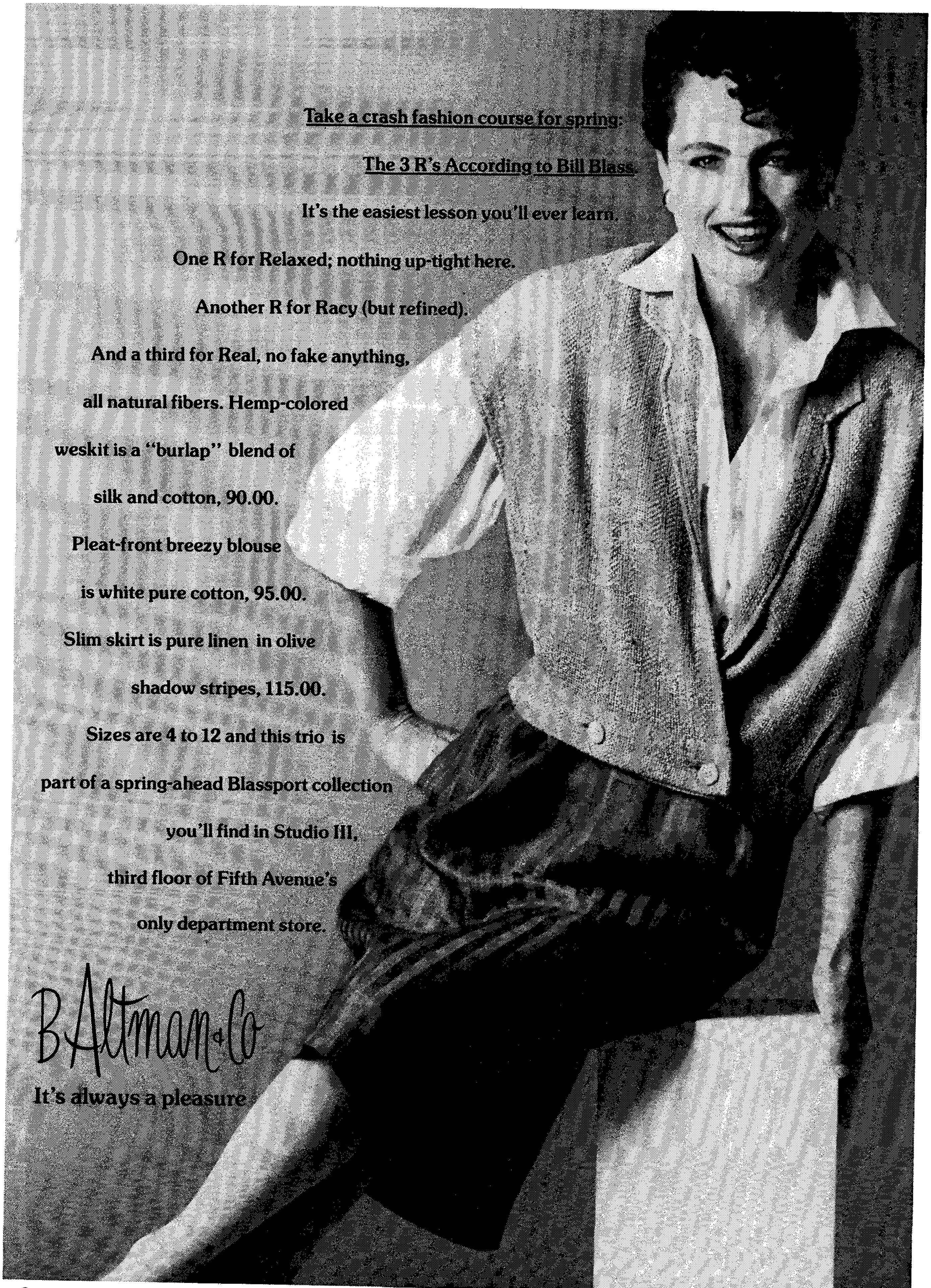

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Angels Fall—A pleasantly old-fashioned play, by Lanford Wilson, about a handful of disparate characters trapped for a few hours in a mission church in New Mexico. The cast, headed by Barnard Hughes and Fritz Weaver, is superb. The director is Marshall W. Mason. Not to be missed. (Reviewed in our issue of 1/31/83.) (Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Cats—Ezra Pound nicknamed T. S. Eliot "Old Possum," and under that name Eliot wrote a collection of poems about cats, and now the cats are on display on Broadway, with music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, scenery by John Napier, and direction by Trevor Nunn. (10/18/82) (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6222. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

The Entertainer—In this revival, Nicol Williamson appears in the role that John Osborne wrote for Laurence Olivier twenty-five years ago, yet even Mr. Williamson, fine actor that he is, cannot conceal the ear-bending tedium of Archie Rice, the tacky vaudevillian who vents his spleen on his family and subjects the audience to his atrocious monologues. Frances Cuka is very good as his abused, gin-soaked wife. (1/31/83) (Roundabout Stage One, 333 W. 23rd St. 242-7800. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2. Closes Saturday, March 12.)

Extremities—Susan Sarandon in a play by William Mastrosimone. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays and Sundays at 3.)

Foxfire—Jessica Tandy and Hume Cronyn are at the top of their form in this rather ramshackle little play about life in the Blue Ridge Mountains of northern Georgia. The authors of the play are Susan Cooper and Mr. Cronyn. (11/22/82) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Goodnight, Grandpa—Milton Berle and Lee Wallace in a play by Walter Landau. Opens Wednesday, March 2. (Entermedia, 189 Second Ave., at 12th St. 475-4191. Opening-night curtain at 6:45; thereafter, Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

Greater Tuna—Joe Sears and Jaston Williams, a pair of nimble, clever actors, portray twenty citizens (m. and f.) of the third-smallest town in Texas, in a play that is as broad as a cartoon but is also sharp and satiric and frequently funny. It was written by Mr. Williams, Mr. Sears, and their director, Ed Howard. (11/1/82) (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

The Holly and the Ivy—An English domestic play that all but stifles in its own gentility. The late Wynyard Browne was the dramatist. Staged by Lindsay Anderson. (11/29/82) (Susan Bloch Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. 242-7800. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2. Closes Sunday, March 13.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Two Gilbert and Sullivan productions. Through Sunday, March 6: **THE MIKADO.** . . . ¶ Starting Wednesday, March 9: **PATIENCE.** (Eastside, 334 E. 74th St. 861-2288. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8:30. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Saturdays and Sundays at 4.)

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Little Shop of Horrors—Based on Roger Corman's 1960 horror quickie about a man-eating plant, this exuberant, jokey musical is untainted by camp. The spirited, tuneful rock score is by Alan Menken, and Howard Ashman wrote the witty book and witty lyrics; the singing and comic acting by the entire company are a credit to Mr. Ashman, the inventive director. Martin P. Robinson designed and manipulates the menacing plant, and it speaks and sings in the menacing baritone of Ron Taylor. With Lee Wilkof as the apprentice florist who discovers and nurtures it, and Ellen Greene as the lady he loves. (9/27/82) (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Marcel Marceau—The French mime in a limited engagement that opens Wednesday evening, March 9 (preview Tuesday, March 8). (Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Merlin—An unlucky mingling of musical comedy and magic. Doug Henning can make horses vanish into thin air, but he can't transform himself into a romantic troubadour. (2/28/83) (Mark Hellinger, 237 W. 51st St. 757-7064. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The Misanthrope—Molière's masterpiece, in the superb translation by Richard Wilbur. With Brian Bedford, Mary Beth Hurt, and Carole Shelley. Starting Tuesday, March 8, Stephen McHattie will replace Mr. Bedford. (2/14/83) (Circle in the Square, Broadway at 50th St. 581-0720. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

On Your Toes—Natalia Makarova, George S. Irving, Dina Merrill, Christine Andreas, and George de la Peña in a revival of the Rodgers-Hart-Abbott musical, first presented here in 1936. Mr. Abbott is again the director. Previews through Saturday, March 5. Opens officially on Sunday, March 6. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 977-9370. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8; opening-night curtain at 6. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

Plenty—The fascinating heroine of this play by the English dramatist David Hare is a woman who, after her experiences with the French underground during the Second World War, conducts her own private war against every aspect of English life. Most of Mr. Hare's post-John Osborne targets are familiar by now, but his characters and scenes and lines are original and strong, and

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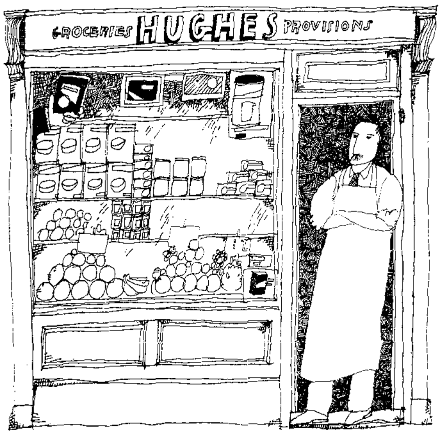
SHOP TALK

(What's in a store? A brief consideration)



A Nation of Shopkeepers

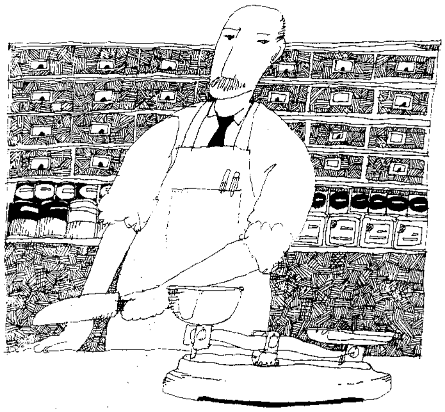
England has been called "a nation of shopkeepers," and rightly so. We know a man living in London who comes home every Thursday to find his refrigerator newly stocked by the grocer across the street. This particular grocery store is about the size and shape of a butler's pantry, presided over by a Dickensian character named Hughes. Hughes sells loose tea but no tea bags, because he doesn't approve of them. On most of the items he stocks, he sees no reason to carry more than one brand – the one that is, in his opinion, the best. Hughes' customers come to him for staples, dairy products and his eccentricities. He has organized his shop according to his outlook on the world: it is a pleasant, well-ordered place.

The American Way

We were thinking, rather longingly, of Hughes the other day, as we stood in the checkout line at our local supermarket. There was everything we needed – meat, produce, dry goods – all under one roof; there was every brand name in existence. Indiscriminate, enormous, anonymous but efficient – mass-marketing is an American tradition. Our stores put democracy into practice by selling something for everyone.

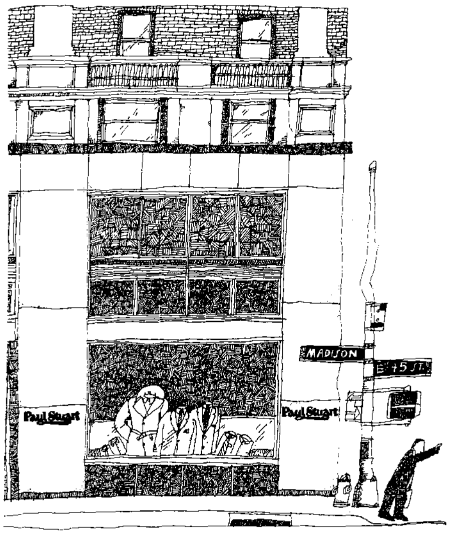
A Matter of Opinion

While we subscribe to that ideal in theory, it is, if the truth be known, Hughes' one-man grocery that gets our vote. We find that our own store has a good deal more in common with his than with our neighborhood supermarket, or even department stores. Like Hughes, we have certain inflexible standards for the goods we sell and staunch convictions about the way they should be sold. Here, then, are a few of those principles:



1. A remarkable fabric is to the design of a suit or shirt or tie what flavorful ingredients are to a recipe. No material, no matter how even the texture or solid the color, should lack for character.
2. In clothing, it's the proportion that counts – the turn of the lapel, the curve of the collar, the taper of the sleeve. We work closely with our master tailors to make sure that the clothes we sell are cut according to our precise specifications.
3. The uncommon is preferable to the commonplace. We have been known to buy six of some unusual item, because only six were available. Within a few hours, all six were sold. That, we figure, is the risk of stocking goods that aren't mass-produced. We beg our customers' understanding when our supply is sold out.
4. Merchandise should be displayed sensibly, in such a way that a customer can readily find what he is looking for. Because we insist on an atmosphere of calm and organization, we edit our stock – what we don't believe in, we simply don't sell.
5. Good service is personable but not obtrusive. Our sales staff is willing to advise, if asked.
6. The proper fit is not a luxury but a necessity. Making a virtue of necessity, our staff of fitters is second to none. In short, we think the distinction between a store and a shop is a bit like that between a house and a home. Both homes and shops take on the characteristics of their owners.

Our ambition, if that's not too lofty a word for it, is to be to clothes what Hughes is to groceries. Not big or famous but distinguished and well-thought-of. Not predictable but consistent, and reassuring for that. We cannot hope to please everyone, only those likeminded individuals who are our customers.



Paul Stuart

Madison Ave. at 45th St., N.Y., N.Y. 10017 the performances, under his direction, are first-rate. Kate Nelligan is his driven heroine and Edward Herrmann is her stalwart, victimized husband; among the supporting actors are Ellen Parker, Daniel Gerroll, and George N. Martin. (11/1/82) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, March 27.)

Poppie Nongena—A demonstration—narrative, song, dance—of South Africa's brutality to its nonwhite citizens. The action covers forty years in the life of one woman. The performance of the South African company is very good indeed. Sophie Mgcina composed most of the beautiful music. (1/31/83) (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 489-2420. Nightly at 8. Matinées Wednesday and Saturday at 2. Closes Saturday, March 5.)

Quartermaine's Terms—The title character of Simon Gray's very funny yet sad comedy is a teacher in a school for foreign students in England whom loneliness has made even more bubble-brained than God did. Remak Ramsay gives a fine performance in the leading role, and Roy Poole, Caroline Lagerfelt, Anthony Heald, and Dana Ivey are good, too. Kenneth Frankel directed. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Playhouse 91, 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

Slab Boys—A revival of Scottish playwright John Byrne's play, with Kevin Bacon, Sean Penn, Val Kilmer, and Jackie Earle Haley. Robert Allan Ackerman is the director. Previews through Sunday, March 6. Opens officially on Monday, March 7, at 6:45. (Playhouse, 359 W. 48th St. 586-7670. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sunday, March 6, at 7. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

Snoopy—A musical based on Charles M. Schulz's comic strip, "Peanuts." The music is by Larry Grossman, the lyrics by Hal Hackady, and the book by Warren Lockhart, Arthur Whitelaw, and Michael L. Grace. (Lambs Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

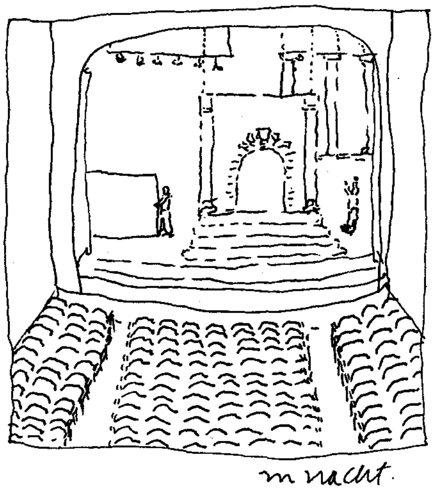
Summer—A play by the glum English dramatist Edward Bond, set in some Eastern European country. Frances Sternhagen, as a wealthy émigré, and Betty Miller, as her former maid, struggle valiantly against the numbing drone of the dialogue. (Manhattan Theatre Club, 321 E. 73rd St. 472-0600. Nightly at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 2:30. Closes Sunday, March 6.)

The Tooth of Crime—A revival of Sam Shepard's strong and stunning play about (among other things) a contest for supremacy between an older man who is trying to hang on and a young punk on his way up. The large band at times drowns out much of the dialogue, and most of the comedy goes by the board as well. Even so, what remains is riveting. The acting is only so-so, but Ray Wise and Jodi Long do quite well. (Reviewed in this issue.) (La Mama Annex, 66 E. 4th St. 475-7710. Nightly, except Tuesdays, at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30.)

Top Girls—The girls of the title either work in or apply for jobs at a London employment agency, and the principal character, whose career we examine, has just been promoted to top top girl. The play, by the adventurous Caryl Churchill, lacks the high spirits and humor of her larky "Cloud 9," but it has its good points, all the same. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

True West—Sam Shepard's comedy about two rival brothers in California, which was given an unsatisfactory production last year, has now been transformed by the superb clowning of John Malkovich and Gary Sinise, of Chicago. Mr. Sinise was the excellent director. (11/29/82) (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 5.)

A View from the Bridge—Arthur Miller's well-known play about family troubles on the Brooklyn waterfront. Tony Lo Bianco and Rose Gregorio head a superb cast. The director is Arvin Brown, of the Long Wharf Theatre, in New Haven, where this production was first put on. (2/14/83) (Ambassador, 215 W. 49th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)



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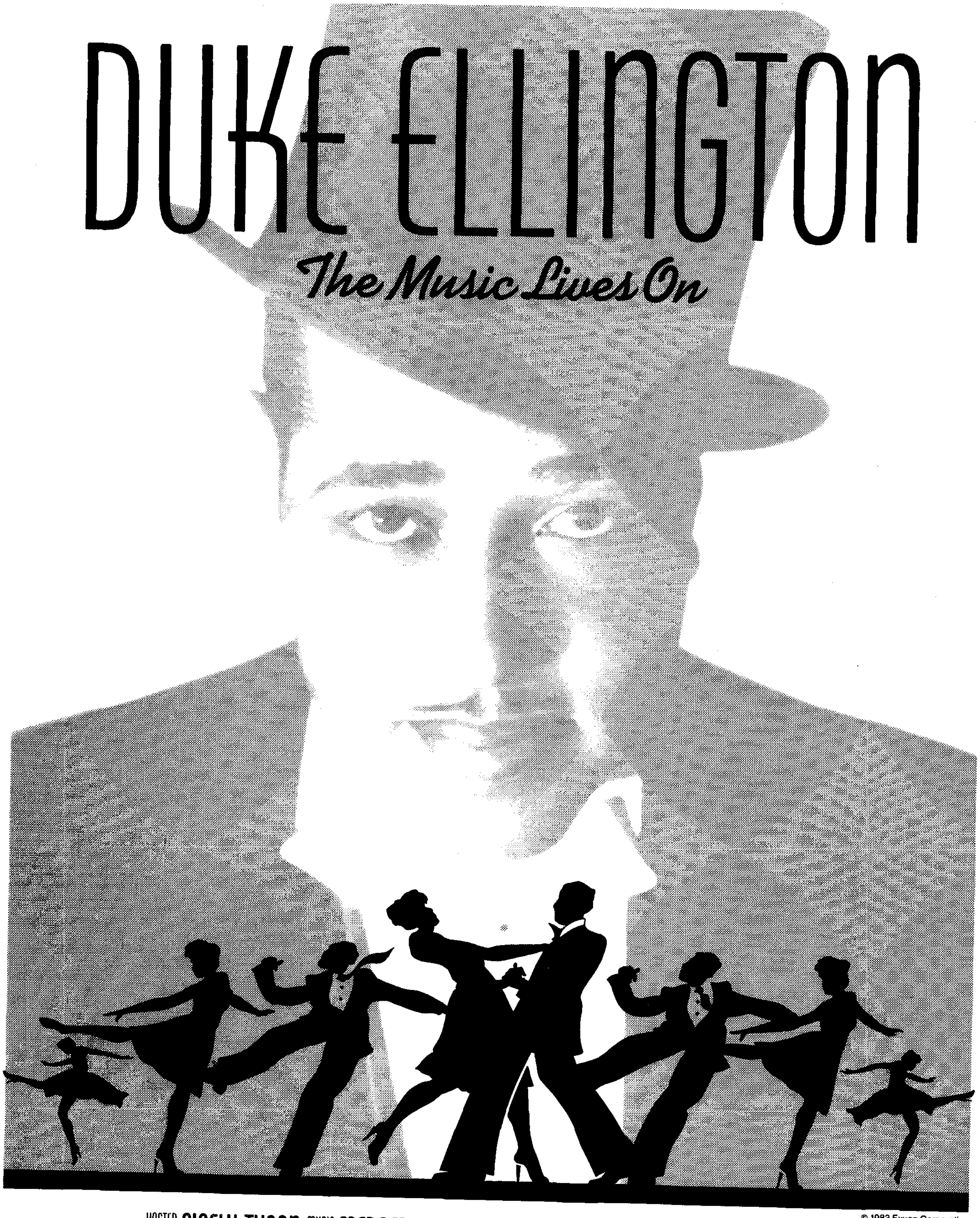
Whodunnit—A graceless and laborious parody of an old-fashioned Agatha Christie English-country-house murder mystery. Only the setting, by Andrew Jackness, is worthy of praise. (1/10/83) (Biltmore, 261 W. 47th St. 582-5340. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Long Runs—**AGNES OF GOD:** Elizabeth Ashley, Geraldine Page, and Carrie Fisher have much to say about a peculiar subject—the apparent virgin birth to a young nun in a convent of a child subsequently found dead. The discussion is a lively one, though the playwright, John Pielmeier, has found no satisfactory way of bringing it to an end. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 246-4636. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **AMADEUS:** A highly intelligent Peter Shaffer thriller having to do, on one level, with the possibility that Mozart's early death was a result of his having been poisoned by a rival and, on another level, with that rival's indignant repudiation of God. David Dukes plays the villainous putative murderer, Antonio Salieri; John Pankow plays the hapless Mozart; and Suzanne Lederer plays his pretty, perky wife. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **CLOUD 9:** Caryl Churchill's comedy about the "confusion" of sexuality—first in a British outpost in Africa in 1880 and then in a park in London in 1980—is a witty and original work that adds a measure of confusion all its own. It is nimbly performed under Tommy Tune's brilliant direction. With Veronica Castang. (Lucille Lortel Theatre, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE DINING ROOM:** The action of A. R. Gurney, Jr.,'s delightful play takes place in a formal dining room over the past fifty years or so, somewhere in New England, and this action is a matter of brief scenes about a large assortment of characters who are portrayed by six accomplished actors. David Trainer was the good director. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St., near Astor Pl. 254-4370. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **DREAMGIRLS:** The slickest possible production of a musical comedy whose book, music, and lyrics are almost totally lacking in character. If Michael Bennett, the director, had been a Union general, the Civil War would have lasted about twenty minutes. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **EVITA:** A sentimental musical about the life and death of Eva Perón. An excellent cast and a stylish production, but Eva remains a very peculiar choice for a heroine. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** 9,504 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **42ND STREET:** Once upon a time there was a silly-wonderful Warner Brothers musical about a young hoofer who goes on in place of a disabled star and herself becomes a star overnight. The legitimate musical that has been fashioned from the movie musical is just as silly but by no means as wonderful. With Jerry Orbach, Millicent Martin, and Lisa Brown. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 246-0730. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **GENIUSES:** Jonathan Reynolds, a gifted playwright, has written an annoying, campy comedy about some movie people on location near Manila during a typhoon. (Douglas Fairbanks Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, March 13.) . . . **JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT:** A musical derived from the Old Testament story. Andrew Lloyd Webber composed the score and Tim Rice wrote the lyrics. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8:15, and Sundays at 6:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **NINE:** A sensationally opulent production of a musical comedy wrenched with little intellectual finesse from the classic movie "8½." Raul Julia is the star. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **OH! CALCUTTA!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 757-7164. Mondays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **PUMP BOYS AND DINETTES:** A thoroughly engaging and spirited little cabaret musical, set in a gas station with diner attached, somewhere in the South. Most of the appealing songs were written by Jim Wann or by his wife, Cass Morgan. (Princess, Broadway at 48th St. 586-3903. Mondays and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Wednesday, March 2, at 2.) . . . **SISTER MARY IGNATIUS EXPLAINS IT ALL FOR YOU** and **THE ACTOR'S NIGHTMARE:** "Sister Ignatius," the second of Christopher Durang's brace of one-acters, is a scathing satire on Catholic education: a crazy nun verbally molests her small pupils until she is given her comeuppance by four visiting alumni. With Nancy Marchand. In the curtain-raiser, "The Actor's Nightmare," a businessman dreams that he is on a stage and forced to perform, giving rise to a cluster of shrewd parodies of respected playwrights. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **TORCH SONG TRILOGY:** Three plays—humorous, sad, sentimental, and witty—by and starring Harvey Fierstein, as a Jewish homosexual hustler and drag queen. Richard DeFabees substitutes for Mr. Fierstein at the matinée performances. (Little Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **WOMAN OF THE YEAR:** Debbie Reynolds has the title role in this musical-comedy version of the old Hepburn-Tracy movie. The music and lyrics are by Kander and Ebb, and the direction is by Robert Moore. (Palace, Broad-



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MISCELLANY

Forbidden Broadway—A musical satire of Shubert Alley denizens. The lyrics to the song parodies are by Gerard Alessandrini. (Palsson's Upstairs, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8:30; Fridays and Saturdays at 8:30 and 11:30; and Sundays at 8:30.)

Martin Charnin's Upstairs at O'Neals'—A lively little revue with a young cast of six, whose ranks may or may not include a future Chita Rivera or Joel Grey. (Reviewed in this issue.) (O'Neals', 147 W. 43rd St. 382-1614. Tuesdays at 8 and 10:30; Wednesdays and Thursdays at 8; Fridays at 8 and 10:30; and Saturdays at 7, 9:30, and midnight.)

Bunraku—The first of ten performances by the National Puppet Theatre of Japan. (Lila Acheson Wallace Auditorium, Japan House, 333 E. 47th St. 752-3015. Saturday, March 12, at 8.)

DANCE

Jennifer Muller & the Works—A one-week engagement. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Wednesday through Saturday, March 2-5, at 8, and Sunday, March 6, at 3.)

Les Ballets Trocadero de la Karpova—Performances of "The Firebird" and other ballets. (18th St. Playhouse, 145 W. 18th St. 929-7907. Friday and Saturday, March 4-5, and Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, at 11. Closes Wednesday, March 23.)

Riverside Dance Festival—Performances by two companies. **DANIEL MC CUSKER & COMPANY:** Wednesday, March 2, and Friday, March 4, at 8, and Sunday, March 6, at 2. . . . **OHAD NAHARIN & DANCERS:** Wednesday, March 9, and Friday, March 11, at 8, and Sunday, March 13, at 2. (Theatre of the Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. 864-2929.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Angry Squire, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—A cozy, convivial Chelsea bar and restaurant gussied up as a nautical pub. The four-foot-high bandstand is more likely to induce acrophobia than seasickness. Friday and Saturday, March 4-5, the buzzing, hum-along bassist **MAJOR HOLLEY** and **HILTON RUIZ,** a driving young pianist, team up; Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, pianist **WALTER BISHOP, JR.,** will guide a trio. Sets at ten, eleven-thirty, and one.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A real solid trio—ex-Dizzy Gillespieite **MIKE LONGO** on piano, drummer **AL HAREWOOD,** and bassist **BOB CRANSHAW**—can be found here through Sunday, March 6; Monday, March 7, will be claimed by the Jimmy Madison–Angel Rangelov big band; Tuesday through Thursday, March 8-10, the piano-bass team of **JUNIOR MANCE,** another Dizzy G. alumnus, and **MARTY RIVERA** will take charge; and on Friday, March 11, the **MODERN JAZZ QUARTET** will get together again for a ten-night visit. There are usually three sets, beginning at nine-thirty.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—The varied schedule: Thursday and Friday, March 3-4, the Uncle Floyd Show; Saturday and Sunday, March 5-6, **PHOEBE SNOW** and **EDGAR WINTER;** Wednesday, March 9, Tower of Power; Thursday, March 10, Firefall and Luke Fredricks; Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, **BETTY CARTER** and her trio, and the **DAVID AMRAM** quintet. Sundays through Thursdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine and midnight. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—The epitome of an intimate, dark-wood-panelled, sophisticated New York bar. Bassist **EDDIE GOMEZ** supports pianist Eliani Elias through Saturday, March 5; on Monday, March 7, **JOANNE BRACKEEN** and **CECIL MC BEE** will begin a week of duets. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

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Broadway Joe's, 315 W. 46th St., near Eighth Ave. (246-6513)—The urbanely swinging **JIMMY LYON,** who plays piano until ten in Peacock Alley at the Waldorf, a large, *very* subdued room, comes to this convivial, buzzing, smallish barroom, where he gets an impressive second wind. He's here from ten-thirty to two Fridays and Saturdays. On Wednesdays and Thursdays from nine until two, singer and pianist **BOB DOROUGH,** who is not quite as citified as Mr. Lyon—you can still hear Arkansas in his voice—mans the keyboard. Dining.

Café Pierre, in the Pierre Hotel, Fifth Ave. at 61st St. (838-8000)—**BUCKY PIZZARELLI,** who occasionally lets loose on hot-chord solos on his resonant seven-string (the seventh string is a bass string) guitar, guides a trio Tuesdays through Saturdays from nine to one. Dining and dancing.

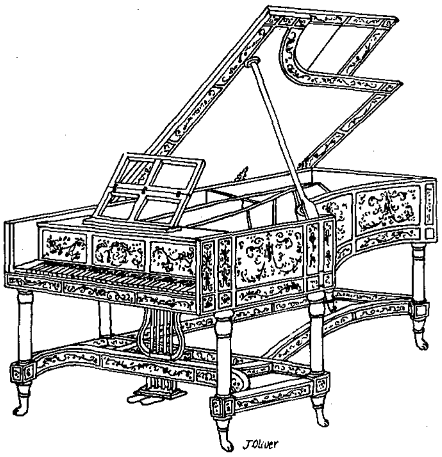
Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle is headquarters through Saturday, March 5, for pianist and composer **JOE BUSHKIN** and his quartet. On Wednesday, March 9, **BARBARA COOK** will begin singing here. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at ten and midnight. Dining. . . . ¶ In the Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** is at the piano nightly, except Sundays, from nine.

Carnegie Tavern, 165 W. 56th St. (757-9522)—A bar and restaurant painted the color of Vienna-roast coffee beans. **ELLIS LARKINS,** the demure, elegant pianist who in the past has accompanied Joe Williams, Helen Humes, Ella Fitzgerald, Sylvia Syms, and many other singers, is the star here. He appears nightly, except Sundays, from nine to midnight.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—The Bowery Institute of Rock and Roll. Wednesday, March 2, the Keystones, the Static Disrupters, Uh-Oh, and the Baxters. Monday is showcase night. Music from long after nine-thirty.

Cookery, 21 University Pl., at 8th St. (674-4450)—**OSCAR BRAND,** a veteran performer of mainstream, seagoing, and "bawdy" folk-songs, sings and strums Tuesdays through Saturdays. Shows at nine-fifteen and eleven. Dining.

Eagle Tavern, 355 W. 14th St., at Ninth Ave. (924-0275)—Bluegrass, string-band, and Irish, British, and American folk music made by visiting players from New England, the Eastern seaboard, and Appalachia is the fare, along with pitchers of beer. Wednesday, March 2, Clairseach and Robin Howard; Thursday, March 3, **ORRIN STAR,** a champion flat picker, and his sidekick, **GARY MEHALICK;** Saturday, March 5, **SKYLINE,** led by banjoist **TONY TRISCHKA;** Wednesday, March 9, an Irish-music jam; Thursday, March 10, Scott Ainslie & Hank Sapoznick; and Saturday, March 12, Jay Ungar & Lyn Hardy, with Molly Mason. Music Wednesdays at eight-thirty, Thursdays at eight-fifteen, and Saturdays at nine.



Eddie Condon's, 144 W. 54th St. (265-8277)—One of the two homes for traditional small-band jazz on the block (see also Jimmy Ryan's below). The house band swings it Tuesdays through Saturdays from eight-thirty to two; soprano saxophonist **BOB WILBER** leads his hot-jazz group, the Bechet Legacy, on Mondays from eight-thirty. Sunday, March 6, will be given over to saxophonist **HAROLD ASHBY'S** quartet, which will perform from about nine-fifteen. Dining.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—A sleek, well-attended basement jazz club. An absolutely first-rate six-part assembly—**ART FARMER** on flugelhorn, tenor saxophonist **BENNY GOLSON** (who doesn't perform in New York too often but whose wonderfully lush compositions, "I Remember Clifford," "Out of the Past," and others, are heard everywhere), trombonist **CURTIS FULLER,** drummer **ALBERT (TUTTI) HEATH,** bassist **RAY DRUMMOND,** and pianist **MICKEY TUCKER**—will be onstage through Sunday, March 6. (The group is called the Jazztet All-Stars, after the out-of-the-past Farmer-Golson Jazztet of the late fifties and early sixties.) On Tuesday, March 8, tenor saxophonists **CLIFFORD JORDAN** and **BUCK HILL** will co-pilot a band. The first set begins about nine. Dining. Closed Mondays.

Folk City, 130 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (254-8449)—Considerably more musical than Tie City or Food City. Wednesday, March 2, Steve Almaas' Beat Rodeo; Thursday, March 3, Marty Cutler & Charged Particles and Kenny Kosek & Alan Feldman; Friday, March 4, the **IRISH TRADITION;** Saturday, March 5, Jesse Winchester; Sunday, March 6, comedienne Jane Bruckner; Wednesday, March 9, Mofungo, with Elliot Sharp, and Mudmen; Thursday, March 10, Soviet Sex; Friday, March 11, **GEORGE GERDES;** and Saturday, March 12, Celtic Thunder. Two shows—the first one getting under way about nine—every night but Wednesday, when the music starts at ten, and Monday, which is hootenanny night and begins about eight.

Greene Street, 101 Greene St., near Prince St. (925-2415)—A sort of indoor *piazza del popolo* for SoHo tourists and the *popolo* who can afford to live there. There are brick walls and archways, lots of vegetation (in pots), wicker furniture, and balcony vistas. The schedule: Kim Shaw through Thursday, March 3; Friday and Saturday, March 4-5, Tina Fabrik; Sunday through Wednesday, March 6-9, pianist **HILTON RUIZ;** and Thursday through Saturday, March 10-12, singer, pianist, and composer **AMINA CLAUDINE MYERS.** Sets begin Sundays through Thursdays at nine and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine, eleven, and one. Dining.

Gregory's, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—Guitarist Jack Fragomeni heads a trio Wednesdays through Sundays, and on Tuesdays guitarist **CHUCK WAYNE** heads up a trio. On Monday, March 7, singer Janet Lawson will drop by with her backup crew. All these groups play from ten. Sundays from five to ten are claimed by pianist **BROOKS KERR,** and Loumell Morgan plays piano the same hours Mondays through Fridays.

Griff's, Third Ave. at 37th St. (867-7179)—An open-air terrace wraps around this second-story restaurant. The inside is pleasant and modern and warmer. The piano-bass teams: Mike Melillo and Gene Perla through Saturday, March 5, and the Esther Blue duo beginning Tuesday, March 8. Sets begin at nine. Sundays and Mondays, **NINA SHELDON** sings and plays piano from seven until eleven.

Hanratty's, 1754 Second Ave., at 91st St. (289-3200)—The East Side twin—it's actually a little fancier—of a West Side hangout. This one attracts neatly dressed couples and hires jazz pianists. (The other attracts some of the West Side literati and plugs in a jukebox.) **JUDY CARMICHAEL,** who might look like a wisp of a girl but who is actually a fireballing stride and piano-rag player, barrels through her repertoire until Saturday, March 5. Music

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Sundays through Thursdays from eight-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays from nine.

Jazzmania Society, 40 W. 27th St. (532-7666)—A big, airy space with tables and chairs, couches, and a diminutive bar. Friday and Saturday, March 4-5, electric pianist **Dom Salvador,** a wily, percussive Brazilian-jazz musician and composer, leads his quartet. The music usually begins at eight-thirty. On Fridays, a jam session runs from one to three A.M.

Jimmy Ryan's, 154 W. 54th St. (664-9700)—Ryan's house band, led by trumpeter Spanky Davis, lets loose Tuesdays through Saturdays. On Mondays, **Max Kaminsky** is in charge. Music weeknights from nine-thirty to three. On Sundays, Kaminsky directs another group of musical archivists from eight until two.

Knickerbocker Saloon, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A pleasant corner restaurant and bar that is crowded with good listeners. Super bassist **Ron Carter** and his longtime colleague, pianist **Cedar Walton,** have settled in here, performing Tuesdays through Saturdays. The regular Sunday-and-Monday men are pianist **Junior Mance** and bassist **Marty Rivera.** Music from ten.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—An authentic Texas hangout for expatriate Texans, for New Yorkers, and for French tourists. The music is usually good solid blues, rock, folk, or country, and it starts after eight-thirty. Wednesday, March 2, a Texas Independence Day celebration; Thursday, March 3, Orleans; Sunday, March 6, Chicago blueswoman **Koko Taylor;** Monday, March 7, Dean Friedman; Tuesday, March 8, Jonathan Edwards; and Thursday, March 10, the Aztec Two-Step. Dining.

Lush Life, 184 Thompson St., at Bleecker St. (228-3788)—**Quest,** a group that features pianist **Richie Beirach,** saxophonist **Dave Liebman,** and drummer **Billy Hart,** is present at this relaxed hangout for musicians and listeners alike through Sunday, March 6. Tuesday, March 8, saxophonist Hal McKusic will visit with his combo; and on Wednesday, March 9, vibraharpist **Bobby Hutcherson** will arrive with his quintet. Sets start at nine-thirty. Dining. Closed Mondays.

Marty's, 1265 Third Ave., at 73rd St. (249-4100)—The singer's room with a view of a garden and a view of **Chris Connor** through Saturday, March 5, and of **Carmen McRae** beginning Monday, March 7. Mondays through Thursdays at nine and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at ten and midnight. Dining.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—"Julius La Rosa Sings the Dream Lyrics of Oscar Hammerstein" is the title of the current attraction, which runs Tuesdays through Saturdays from nine-fifteen. Mondays, the New Orleans Funeral and Ragtime Band is on the stand from nine to midnight. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Mikell's, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—The hippest spot on Columbus Avenue, which is known for the R. & B. and jazz bands that have been performing here for the good part of a decade. The schedule: Thursday, March 3, Dave Tofani; Friday and Saturday, March 4-5, **Dave Valentin,** a very fine Latin-jazz flutist; Monday, March 7, Ted Tiltzer; Tuesday, March 8, Gene Teramani; Thursday, March 10, Joe Cool; and Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, French Toast. Music from about ten until two. Dining.

Other End, 149 Bleecker St. (673-7030)—Folk, blues, rock, and jazz in an intimate room that has fine sight lines to the stage. The roster: the R. & B. sounds of the **Encyclopedia of Soul** Wednesday, March 2; Kevin Harris Thursday, March 3; Robert Hunter and Chris Smither Friday and Saturday, March 4-5; and singer **Etta James** Friday and Saturday, March 11-12. Shows at nine-thirty and midnight. Sundays are reserved for a jam session from about ten. Mondays, a talent showcase begins at eight. Dining and dancing.

Peacock Alley, in the Waldorf-Astoria, Park Ave. at 49th St. (355-3000)—**Jimmy Lyon** is playing piano in this quiet room, which functions as a sort of passageway connecting the hotel lobby with a dining room. Mr. Lyon, who has accompanied Mabel Mercer throughout the past decade, has a touch that seems magically smooth and cushioned, and his timing is unassailable. He's on hand Tuesdays through Saturdays from six to ten.

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Rainbow Room, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (757-9090)—**Panama Francis and the Savoy Sultans** have moved in to play uplifting, irresistible music to Lindy to Tuesdays through Thursdays from seven to one; Fridays and Saturdays from eight to two; and Sundays from six to midnight. Dining.

Red Blazer Too, 1576 Third Ave., at 88th St. (876-0440)—A large, busy establishment that has a slightly touristy feel to it. Traditional jazz is presented from about nine every night but Sunday, when it begins at seven. Dining.

Ritz, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—A ballroom that dates from 1935, when the building was remodelled—the building itself dates from 1889—to accommodate neighborhood social-club dances. It has been turned into a sort of Avalon Ballroom East. Rock from the fifties, sixties, seventies, and eighties. Thursday, March 3, Triplets; Friday, March 4, R.E.M.; Saturday, March 5, the Members; and Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, the Thompson Twins. Shows tend to begin sometime after midnight. Dancing. Closed Sundays.

Seventh Avenue South, 21 Seventh Ave. S., at Leroy St. (242-4694)—A second-floor jazz club in which most of the walls are refreshingly austere. The roster: Wednesday, March 2, fiery blues and jazz guitarist **Yoshiaki Masuo;** Thursday through Saturday, March 3-5, Idiot Savant; and Tuesday, March 8, singer **Grace Testani** and her backing foursome—pianist **Mike Abene,** bassist **Steve La Spina,** drummer **Akira Tana,** and percussionist **Nydia Mata.** Much of the music is amplified jazz-rock, and it runs from nine-thirty.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940) This new club, a reformed luncheonette (or a lapsed luncheonette, depending on your attitude toward night clubs and luncheonettes), is a great place to listen to Brazilian music—Brazilian-jazz groups, samba bands, and all-percussion ensembles that perform *carnaval* music—and it tends to be swirling, heady, wonderful stuff. On its busy weekends, the club feels like the rush hour in Rio. Wednesdays and Thursdays are claimed by an Argentine pianist, **Jorge Dalto,** Cuban percussionist **Potato Valdez,** and their **Inter American Band;** Friday and Saturday, March 4-5, **Loremil Machado & the Sarava Bahia Band** will shake things up; Sunday, March 6, Clarice Taylor will sing with her trio; Tuesday, March 8, will belong to Marcos Silva; and on Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, the place will be taken over by the group **Pé-de-Boi.** Music from ten. Dining. Closed Mondays.

Star and Garter, 105 W. 13th St., near Sixth Ave. (242-3166)—A comfortable, informal room. Violinist **Bernie Charles** will play duets with pianist **Bross Townsend** on Friday and Saturday, March 4-5; and on Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, the Dave Hopkins trio will be present. Music from ten. Dining.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A bustling knotty-pine room. Trombonist **Slide Hampton** and tenor saxophonist **Jimmy Heath** lead their quintet through Saturday, March 5; Sunday and Monday, March 6-7, will belong to trombonist **Craig Harris** and his quintet; and on Tuesday, March 8, trumpeter **Johnny Coles** will bring in a group that will feature saxophonists **Junior Cook** and **Charles Davis,** bassist **Buster Williams,** and pianist **Stanley Cowell.** Shows from about ten. Dining.

Trax, 100 W. 72nd St., near Columbus Ave. (799-1448)—Rock and roll downstairs. The understated entrance is easy to miss. Wednesday, March 2, Master Beats and Urgence; Thursday, March 3, Adult Music; Friday, March 4, Tony Frye and Jail Bait; Saturday, March 5, Urban Blight and the Majestics; Tuesday, March 8, Richie Scarlett; Wednesday, March 9, Jessie & the Whiz Kids and Peter Bliss; Friday, March 11, Bob Duncan; and Saturday, March 12, Urgent and Knucklehead Smith. Music after eleven, usually. Dancing. Closed Sundays.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—Monday night is salsa night in the big downstairs room; on March 7, **Ray Barretto's** orchestra, **Orquesta Broadway,** and saxophonist-soloist **Robin Kenyatta** will be on the bandstand from about nine. And out on the Terrace on Tuesdays, jazz harpist **Daphne Hellman** plays from nine.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—An international jazz landmark. **Dexter Gordon,** one of the greats and still going quite strong, is here with his quartet through Sunday, March 6; on Tuesday, March 8, alto saxophonist **Paquito D'Rivera** and his macho Latin-jazz quintet will move in. Mondays are now claimed by **Frank Foster** and his talented, energetic big band. Music from ten.

Village West, 577 Hudson St., near Bank St. (691-2791)—A tile floor, a pressed-tin ceiling, brick walls, and an improved sound system—all the makings for bright acoustics. **Susannah McCorkle** sings here with her trio through Sunday, March 6; on Tuesday, March 8, pianist **Red Mitchell** will arrive. Music Sundays and Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining. No music Mondays.

West Boondock, 114 Tenth Ave., at 17th St. (929-9645)—A warm atmosphere, authentically prepared collard greens, and jazz pianists. Kuni Mikami performs Thursdays through Sundays. Music nightly from eight-thirty until two.

West End, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—Past the steam tables of piping-hot student food, beyond the pinball machines is a room full of mostly swing music. Tenor saxophonist **Willis (Gator Tail) Jackson,** a honker, a squawker, and a growler when he's playing R. & B., and a smooth light-and-airy swinger on more mainstream stuff, leads his band through Saturday, March 5; Sunday, March 6, the great altoist **Lee Konitz** will perform solos that really do shimmer in the air; and beginning Tuesday, March 8, guitarist Mike Peters will guide his septet, Django's Music, through some hot-jazz numbers. Music from about nine.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A spacious, airy bar connected to a spacious, airy dining room by a spacious, airy passageway with tables and chairs and jazz musicians in it. The piano-bass lineup: **Phil Markowitz** and Boots Maleson through Saturday, March 5; **Bross Townsend** and **Bob Cunningham** beginning Monday, March 7; and the Sunday regulars, **John Bunch** and **Phil Flanigan.** Music Mondays through Saturdays from nine, and Sundays from eight-thirty.

JAZZ / FOLK / ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

Barry Manilow—Uris, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Wednesday through Saturday, March 2-5, at 8.

Julio Iglesias—Radio City Music Hall, Sixth

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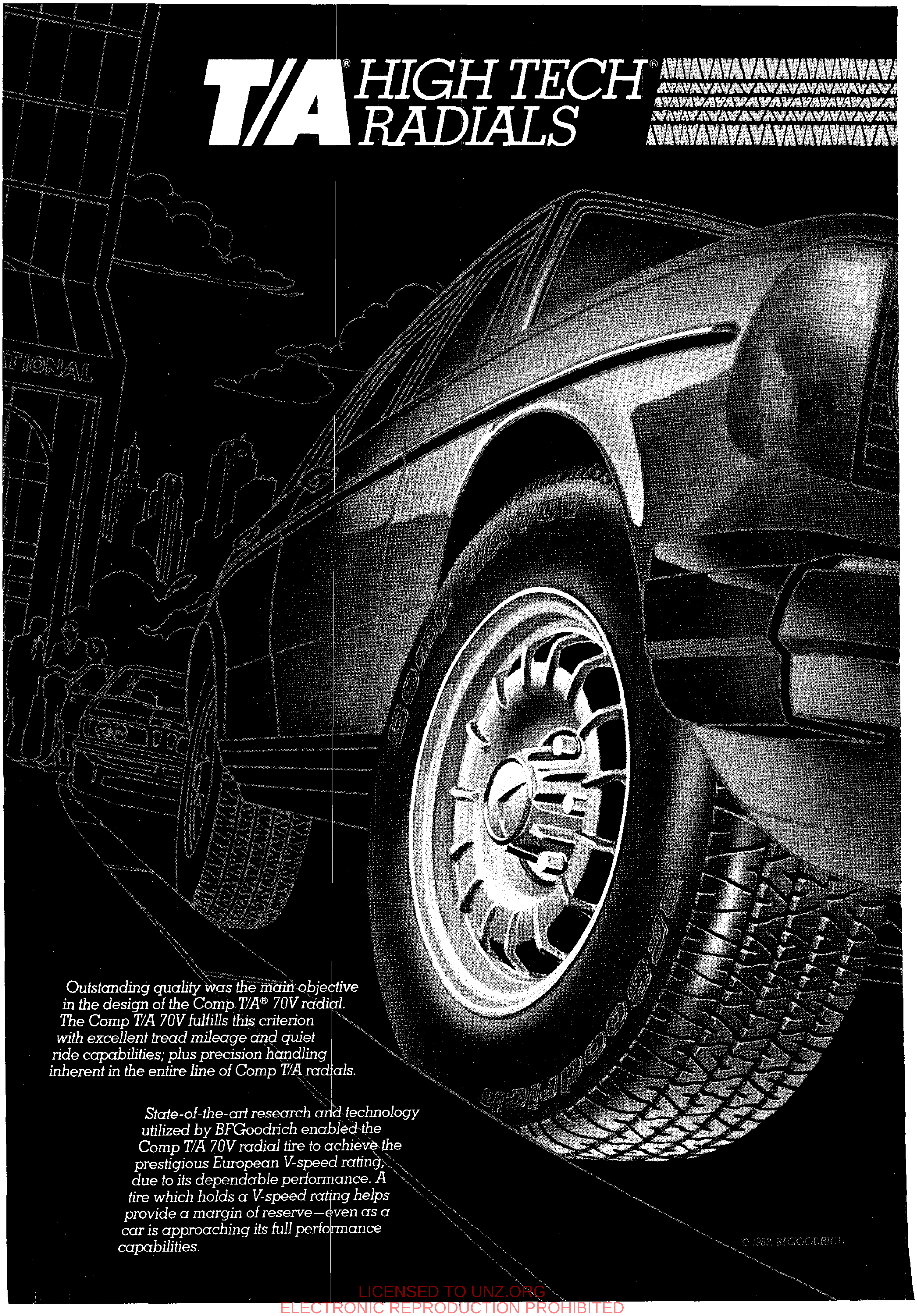

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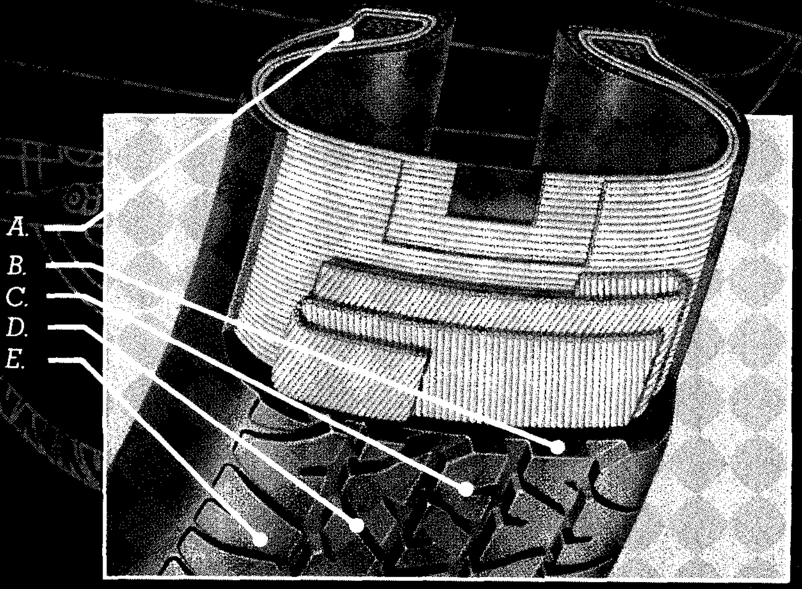

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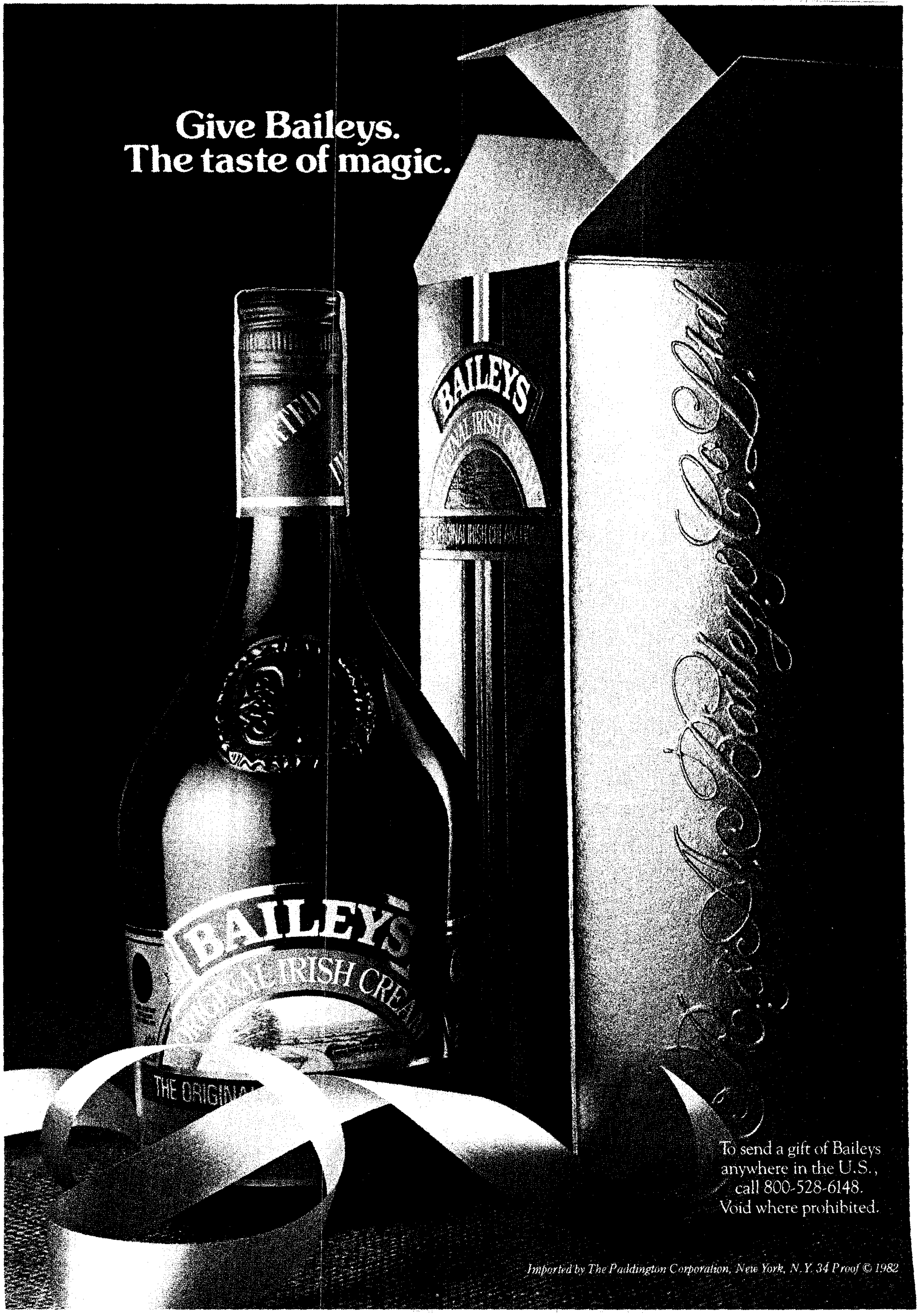
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Ave. at 50th St. 246-4600. Wednesday through Saturday, March 2-5, at 7:30.

Junior Cook–Bill Hardman Quintet—Jazz Cultural Theatre, Eighth Ave. between 28th and 29th St. 244-0997. Friday and Saturday, March 4-5, at 10, 11:30, and 1.

Loudon Wainwright III—With the Persuasions. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Saturday, March 5, at 8.)

Roger Whittaker—Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424. Saturday, March 5, at 8.

Bette Midler—Radio City Music Hall. Tuesday and Wednesday, March 8-9, and Friday through Monday, March 11-14, all at 8.

Kate & Anna McGarrigle and Leo Kottke—Carnegie Hall. 247-7459. Friday, March 11, at 8.

Clancy Brothers—Town Hall. Friday, March 11, at 8.

Jazz Forum—Jazz in a fifth-floor loft. Tuesdays at 9: Jam session. . . . ¶ Wednesday, March 2, at 10 and midnight: Walter Booker duo. . . . ¶ Thursday, March 3, at 10, 11:30, and 1: Renee Adrienne, with Danny Mixon. . . . ¶ Friday and Saturday, March 4-5, at 10, 11:30, and 1: A benefit concert involving Red Rodney, Clifford Jordan, George Coleman, Hilton Ruiz, and others. . . . ¶ Sunday, March 6, at 10 and midnight: Loren Schoenberg band. (Jazz Forum, 648 Broadway, at Bleecker St. 477-2655.)

Soundscape—New music and jazz in another fifth-floor loft. Tuesdays: Daniel Poncé. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 5: Jimmy Lyons quartet. (Soundscape, 500 W. 52nd St. 581-7032. Evenings at 9.)

Jazz Interviews—Anita Ellis (with pianist Luther Henderson), being interviewed by John Gruen. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. Monday, March 7, at 8. Tickets at the box office one hour before the interview.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Patricia Broderick—Cheerful impressions, in oil or oil crayon, of Irish fishermen, theatrical folk, children, and landscapes. Through Saturday, March 5. (Bodley, 1063 Madison Ave., at 80th St.)

Klaus Fussmann—Loosely executed paintings of interiors and landscapes (some with figures), and still-lifes. Through March 19. (Lefebre, 47 E. 77th St.)

Joseph Glasco—Recent paintings: large canvases in black and white, and a number of eight-foot-high canvas-collage screens. Through March 26. (Gimpel, 1040 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Lois Lane—Large paintings in which familiar subjects—a domino mask, a calf, an angel—are treated somewhat abstractly. Through March 16. (Willard, 29 E. 72nd St.)

Leo Lionni—Meticulously executed pencil drawings of botanical forms and rock formations. Through Saturday, March 12. (Staempfli, 47 E. 77th St.)

Joan Mitchell—Huge abstract paintings offering a profusion of springlike colors. Through March 26. (Fourcade, 36 E. 75th St.)

Edith Newhall—Abstract paintings, most of them showing a curved image, like a cresting wave. Through Saturday, March 5. (Ericson, 23 E. 74th St.)

Jules Olitski—Abstract paintings. Through Thursday, March 10. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

Jean-Pierre Péricaud—Abstract acrylic paintings in which a few broad swipes of bright color are laid onto a two-tone background. Through March 16. (Elkon, 1063 Madison Ave., at 80th St.)

Edward Seager (1809-86)—Careful renditions in pencil of scenic spots ranging from Panama to New Hampshire, by an artist who taught drawing at the United States Naval Academy. Through March 16. (Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St.)

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Sylvia Sleigh—Portraits—both formal and informal—of Lawrence Alloway (sometimes in the company of Betty Parsons or with Scott Burton) from the past thirty years. Through March 26. (Einstein, 243 E. 82nd St.)

Herk Van Tongeren—Elegant sculptured wall pieces in bronze, involving geometric forms, and fluted columns. Through Saturday, March 12. (Cordier & Ekstrom, 417 E. 75th St.)

Edouard Vuillard (1868-1940)—Paintings and drawings, including a large interior. Through Thursday, March 10. (Weintraub, 992 Madison Ave., at 77th St.)

Group Shows—At the **Carus,** 872 Madison Ave., at 71st St.. Max Beckmann heads a show of German Expressionist graphics with eighteen of his etchings and lithographs; there are also one or two prints apiece by Kirchner, Kokoschka, Nolde, and others. Through April 1. . . . **CDS Gallery,** 13 E. 75th St.: The versatility of paper as a medium is explored in a show of works by nearly forty artists, among them Douglass Morse Howell, Robert Rauschenberg, and Anne Elliott. Through Saturday, March 12. (Open Mondays.) . . . **Knowlton,** 19 E. 71st St.: Figurative paintings dating from the fifties to the present by veteran Expressionists, among them Robert Beauchamp, Willem de Kooning, and Alice Neel. Through March 26. (Opens at noon on Saturdays.) . . . **Saidenberg,** 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.: A score of paintings and works on paper by Bauhaus associate Herbert Bayer and a scattering of works by other members of that period, among them Kandinsky, Klee, and Schwitters. Through April 15. (Opens at 1 on Saturdays.) . . . **Siegel,** 29 E. 73rd St.: Jerry Buchanan, David Craven, Rex Lau, and Sean Scully showing one recent painting each. Through March 26.

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

Jerry Atkins—Frogs, baboons, and other animals, as well as people, are reduced to their fundamental forms in these sculptures, done in bronze or polymer resin. Through Saturday, March 12. (Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Barton Lidicé Beneš—Assemblages using international paper currency to make visual puns—a stroke of gold paint issues from a paintbrush made of dollar bills; red paint from one of rubles, and so on. Through April 2. (Markel, 50 W. 57th St.)

Carol Brown—Small colored-pencil drawings of brilliantly hued desert scenery—wind-carved rocks and cactus formations. Through March 26. (Witkin, 41 E. 57th St. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

Chuck Close / David von Schlegell—New portraits in a variety of mediums: Watercolors, fingerprint drawings done with stamp-pad ink, and collages made with paper-pulp chips. / Very large abstract wood sculptures. Through March 26. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

Charles Clough—Expressionist works by an artist who with his fingertips applies enamel to reproductions of Old Master paintings and then takes enlarged photographs of the results, which he either works into collages or starts painting on all over again. Through March 26. (Pam Adler, 37 W. 57th St.)

Erté—His work is at three galleries: Dyansen 57, a new gallery branch at 11 E. 57th St. Starts Thursday, March 3. (Open Mondays.) . . . ¶ Dyansen, 122 Spring St. Through March 13. (Open Sundays.) . . . ¶ Fashion Institute of Technology, Seventh Ave., at 27th St. Through March 26. (Open Tuesday evenings until 9.)

Mary Frank—New works, including her familiar ceramic sculptures and a large series of monotypes, plus two five-foot figures put together with lakeside driftwood and partially coated with plaster. Through March 19. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Red Grooms and Peter Saul—Works from the early sixties by these two artists, including paintings of New York and Italy by the former, and paintings inspired by the movie "Psycho" by the latter. Through March 25. (Frumkin, 50 W. 57th St. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

Susan Hall—New paintings employing this artist's familiar images (among them trains and ships seen in the moonlight), but altered this time by heavily drawn lines of black oil stick. Through March 26. (Hamilton, 20 W. 57th St.)

Don Hazlitt—The shadow of the bomb hovers over everything in these paintings, which otherwise have the quality of Mother Goose illustrations. Through Saturday, March 12. (Esman, 29 W. 57th St.)

John Hejduk—Two sets of models and drawings for recent architectural competitions in Berlin and Philadelphia, plus other drawings. Through Saturday, March 5. (Protetch, 37 W. 57th St.)

Theo Hios—Landscapes of Greece in acrylics on canvas. Through March 19. (Summit, 101 W. 57th St. Opens at 11:30.)

Richard Hunt—Drawings on copper plates and in craypas and prints by an artist known primarily as a sculptor. Through March 24. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

John Stuart Ingle—Large-scale watercolor still-lifes and interiors that have a Photo-Realist exactitude without the glare. Through March 31. (Tatistcheff, 38 E. 57th St.)

Harry Koursaros—Recent paintings with recurring floral, mythological, and allegorical motifs. Through April 2. (Haber Theodore, 29 W. 57th St.)

George McNeil—Wild-looking figures from cabarets, carnivals, and lurid dreams, painted in a vivid Expressionist style by this veteran painter, now in his mid-seventies. Through Saturday, March 12. (Gruenebaum, 38 E. 57th St.)

Robert Moskowitz—Big, dark paintings and drawings of imposing subjects—a windmill, for instance, the Flatiron Building, the silhouette of Rodin's "The Thinker." Through March 19. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

Carolyn Plochmann—Richly textured paintings and works on paper, a number of which are organized around portrait figures, such as Bix Beiderbecke and Anton Bruckner, who are shown together. Through Saturday, March 5. (Kennedy, 40 W. 57th St.)

Judy Rifka—The Berlin Wall, classical architecture, and modern dance are among the themes touched on in an exhibition of paintings and set pieces by this new artist. Through Saturday, March 12. (Alexander, 20 W. 57th St.)

William Schwedler (1942-82)—A memorial show of abstract and nonobjective paintings and constructions. Through Wednesday, March 9. (De Nagy, 29 W. 57th St.)

Phil Sims—Large paintings and drawings of black squares consisting of countless vertical strokes with brush or pastel and charcoal which give character to the surface. Through

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Saturday, March 5. (Oscarsson Hood, 41 W. 57th St.)

Randy Stevens—Satirical drawings by an artist whose subject matter has changed from cheerleaders and beauty parlors to art-gallery openings and show-biz stuff. Through Saturday, March 5. (Kornblee, 20 W. 57th St.)

Todd Stone—Abstract paintings. Through March 22. (Arras, 29 W. 57th St.)

Riduan Tomkins—Abstract oils with figurative elements. Through March 16. (Parsons, 24 W. 57th St.)

Ger van Elk—Large photographs of flowers (both handmade and garden-grown) served as the canvases for this artist's paintings. Through Saturday, March 5. (Goodman, 24 W. 57th St.)

Group Shows—At the **aaron berman,** 50 W. 57th St.: Abe Ajay, Elisabeth Munro Smith, and Sylvia Wald are among the dozen artists showing painted constructions and wall reliefs. Through March 26. . . . **galerie st. etienne,** 24 W. 57th St.: Twentieth-century folk painters: Grandma Moses, Nan Phelps, Israel Litwak, Abraham Levin, and others. Through Saturday, March 12. . . . **janis,** 110 W. 57th St.: Abstract paintings by eight New York artists, including Robert Ryman, Jerry Zeniuk, and Marcia Hafif (who was also the curator for this show). Through Saturday, March 5.

GALLERIES—SoHo

Marjorie Abramson—A ceramic wall piece entitled "Truffle" and depicting a split mushroom is typical of this artist's new sculptures. Through March 16. (SoHo 20, at 469 Broome St. Opens at noon.)

Carl Andre—New sculptures by a Minimalist. Through March 26. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Stephen Chapin—Large paintings of events on an imaginary island—storms, drownings, sailboat disasters, military action. Through Saturday, March 5. (Concord, 451 Broome St.)

Joan Gardner / Marilyn Giersbach—Paintings. / Abstract paintings. Through March 19. (55 Mercer Street Gallery.)

Sidney Geist—Sculptures in terra-cotta, bronze, or aluminum, including a terra-cotta head based on a face the artist detected in the background of a Cézanne landscape. Through Saturday, March 12. (Ingber, 460 West Broadway.)

Duncan Hannah—Realist paintings of Grecian hillsides (with goats and ruined temples), trains winding through Alpine passes, Dutch canals, figures. Through Saturday, March 12. (Semaphore, 462 West Broadway.)

Jannis Kounellis—Wall sculptures incorporating found pieces of wood touched up with paint and arranged on long metal shelves, along with an occasional seashell, bit of classical sculpture, or whatever. Through Saturday, March 5. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

Robert Longo—Large-scale works, including an eight-foot-tall silk screen of the dancer Bill T. Jones' head. Through Saturday, March 5. (Metro Pictures, 169 Mercer St.)

Group Shows—At **the drawing center,** 137 Greene St.: Among the dozen emerging artists in this show are Domenic Cretara, whose oils on paper update Old Master religious paintings, and Minnie Maude May Schuyler, whose pencilled sketches are a primitive kind of conceptual art. Through March 30. (Open Mondays; open Wednesday evenings until 8.) . . . **feldman,** 31 Mercer St.: "1984—A Preview" consists of works by upwards of seventy artists (among them Alice Aycock, George Segal, Roy Lichtenstein, Ed Ruscha) which illustrate the Orwellian thesis. Through Saturday, March 12.

OTHER GALLERIES

Hiroshige (1797-1858)—Just over a hundred original woodblock prints, drawings, and pages from books. Through March 19. (Pratt Manhattan Center, 160 Lexington Ave., at 30th St. Open Mondays.)

Stewart Hitch—Paintings of starlike figures. Through March 19. (Bouckaert, 100 Hudson St.)

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Terry Rosenberg—Abstract terra-cotta sculptures based on the human figure and in a line of descent from Rodin, plus bold drawings in black ink. Through Saturday, March 5. (Bromm, 90 West Broadway, at Chambers St.)

Group Shows—At the **federal hall national memorial,** 26 Wall St., at Broad St.: Nearly thirty portraits by contemporary artists represented in the collections of the Whitney Museum, which sponsored this exhibit. Robin Tewes, Mimi Gross, May Stevens, and John Ahearn are among those whose paintings, works on paper, and plaster reliefs are on display. Through April 1. (Mondays through Fridays, 11 to 3.) . . . **white columns,** 325 Spring St., at Greenwich St.: Works by four contemporary English artists—Jan Wandja, John Stezaker, John Wilkins, and Jonathan Miles. Through Sunday, March 6. (Tuesdays through Fridays, 11 to 7; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 7.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Marilyn Bridges—Aerial photographs of Yucatán ruins. Through April 10. (Centro Mexicano del Libro, 24 E. 81st St. Open Tuesday evenings until 8; opens Sundays at noon.)

Roy DeCarava—The Studio Museum in Harlem has mounted an exhibit of a hundred and twenty-five of his silver prints of jazz musicians. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

André Kertész / Arthur Rothstein—Photographs of landscapes and interiors from negatives printed about ten years ago. / New prints. Through Saturday, March 12. (Neikrug, 224 E. 68th St. Wednesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 6.)

Marvin Lazarus (1918-82)—Robert Motherwell, Ad Reinhardt, Man Ray, and other artists photographed in the fifties. Through March 17. (Pearl, 38 E. 57th St.)

Robert Mapplethorpe—Two shows: Photographic works and wall constructions. Through March 26. (Miller, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.) . . . ¶ Photographs of a woman body builder. Starts Saturday, March 5. (Castelli, 142 Greene St.)

Olivia Parker—New works, including still-lifes, by an artist who has begun using a banquet camera. Through Friday, March 11. (Pfeifer, 825 Madison Ave., at 69th St.)

Group Shows—At the **international center of photography,** 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St.: Scandinavian photography, part two, which concentrates on the past seventy years. Through Saturday, March 5. (Tuesdays through Thursdays, noon to 8; Fridays through Sundays, noon to 6.) . . . **prakapas,** 19 E. 71st St.: Photographs by Belgian Surrealist painters René Magritte, Raoul Ubac, Marcel Marien, and others. Through April 9. (Opens at noon; open Tuesday evenings until 8.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—The Vatican Collections. Through June 12. . . . ¶ An exhibit of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italian drawings by such masters as Michelangelo, Raphael, and Leonardo da Vinci. All of the works, which number close to a hundred, are from the museum's collections. Through April 17. . . . ¶ A show of eighty paintings, sculptures, and decorative works received as gifts in the past year, ranging from third-millennium B.C. metalwork cosmetic boxes to a 1982 watercolor by Dorothea Rockburne. Through March 27. . . . ¶ "La Belle Epoque," a show of costumes in period settings. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 8:45; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 4:45; Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 18 W. 54th St.—An architectural exhibit consisting of one large model of each of three skyscrapers under construction in Hong Kong; Jeddah, Saudi Arabia; and Boston. Also, drawings and photomontages. Through March 29. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—Selections from the Peggy Guggenheim collection of twentieth-century paintings and works on paper, brought over for the first time in a decade from the Palazzo Venier dei Leoni in Venice. Through March 13. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—An exhibit of approximately thirty paintings by the Eight, commemorating the seventy-fifth anniversary of their show. Through March 20. . . . ¶ A Frank Stella print retrospective. Through March 13. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—The museum's permanent collection is the primary reason for a visit right now. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—"Star Gods of the Ancient Americas," a show of artifacts from early cultures whose people worshipped the moon and stars. Through March 27. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

American Craft Museum I, 44 W. 53rd St.—A show of twenty-five clay and glass vessels by Glen Lukens (1887-1967). Through April 3. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Asia Society, 725 Park Ave., at 70th St.—A loan show of nearly a hundred Buddhist paintings and sculptures identified with the remote Vajrayana monasteries that lined the trans-Himalayan trade routes during a thousand-year period that began in the seventh century A.D. Through April 3. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8:30; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—A show of about a hundred and fifty fanciful modifications of one line drawing of the south façade of the Carnegie Mansion (otherwise known as the Cooper-Hewitt Museum); the embellishers include Eugène Mihaesco, Pierre Le-Tan, Edward Koren, Charles Addams, and Mamie Eisenhower—who drew an American flag on the building's rooftop. Through May 1. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—An exhibition of six very large constructions in mixed mediums by Frank Stella, who took his inspiration from a collection of photographs of Polish wooden synagogues. Through May 1. (Open daily except Fridays and Saturdays. Hours: Mondays through Thursdays, noon to 5; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—The variety and abundance of symbolic animal imagery

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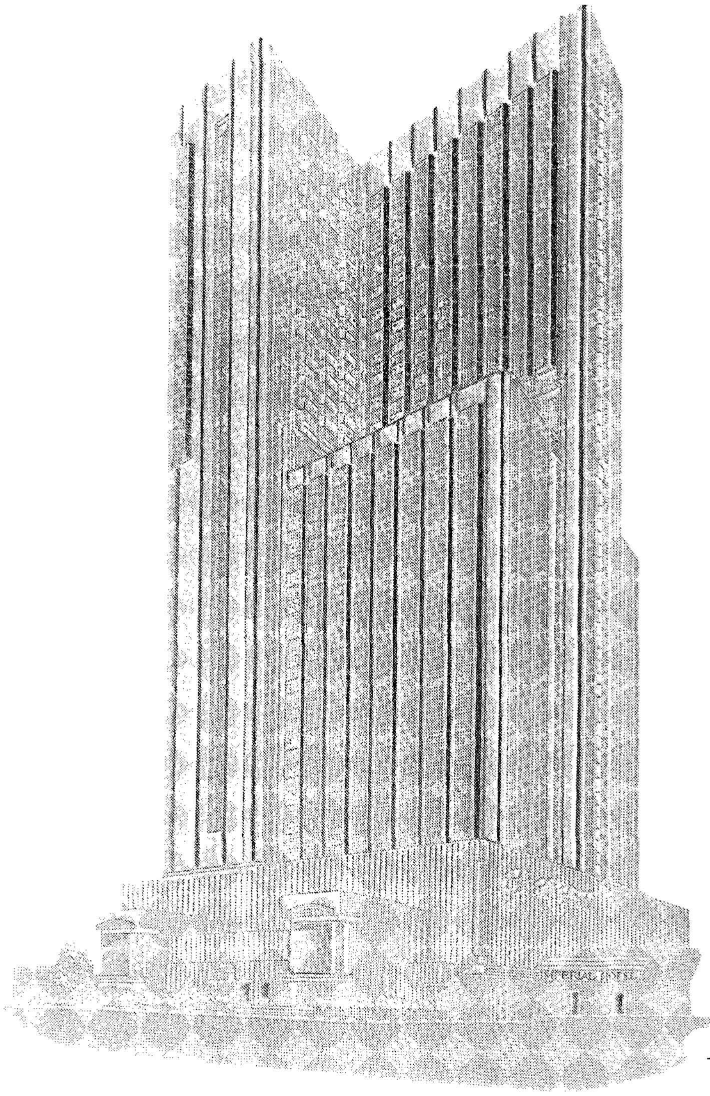

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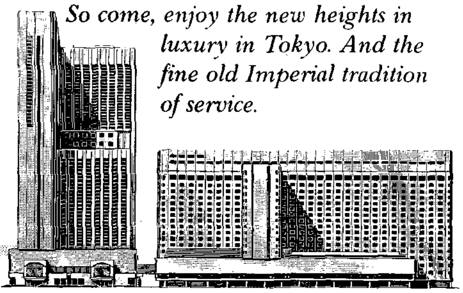

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

in ancient and medieval art provide the basis for a show of cylinder seals and illuminated manuscripts, drawn primarily from the library's collections. Through April 10. . . . ¶ William Blake: Twenty-one watercolors done as illustrations for "The Book of Job," an autograph copy of his collection of poetry known as the Pickering Manuscript, and other works. Through March 31. . . . ¶ A display of about fifty drawings by the eighteenth-century French draftsman Gravelot. Through March 31. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, 1083 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—A loan exhibit of Italian still-life painting covering three centuries (starting with the fifteen-nineties) offers among its forty-six works two attributed to Caravaggio, from the Galleria Borghese, in Rome. Through March 13. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—A show of color-field paintings by Sam Gilliam. Through March 13. . . . **PHOTOGRAPHY:** Roy DeCarava's series on jazz musicians. Through March 20. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 9; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

EXPERIMENTAL OUTPOSTS

(Various avant-garde enterprises that may involve not only traditional art but music, video, dance, and so on.)

Artists Space, 105 Hudson St., at Franklin St. Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6.—A show of paintings, sculptures, and photographs by Ross Anderson, Ericka Beckman, Edwin Rath, and others. . . . ¶ An installation involving flowing water, by Howard Fried. Both shows through March 26.

Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. 925-4671. Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6.—*Julie Harrison (performance and video),* Thursday, March 3, at 8:30; Yura Adams (performance), Thursday, March 10, at 8:30. . . . ¶ Lawrence Weiner, Ian Wilson, Hanne Darboven, and other artists showing works incorporating words. Through April 2. . . . ¶ "One Year Performance," Tehching Hsieh's exhibition of photographs and three hundred and sixty-five maps documenting the days and nights he spent living on the streets of New York. Through Saturday, March 12.

P.S. 1, 46-01 21st St., Long Island City. Exhibition hours: Thursdays through Sundays, 1 to 6.—"Abstract Painting: 1960-69," with works by Al Held, Brice Marden, and Doug Ohlson, is one of the many shows here devoted to art from the sixties. Through March 13.

MUSIC

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Carnegie Hall 247-7459; for Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave., at 83rd St., 570-3949; for Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 427-4410; and for Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Wednesday, March 2, at 8: "Arabella," with Kiri Te Kanawa, Kathleen Battle, David Rendall, and Bernd Weikl; conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. . . . ¶ Thursday, March 3, at 7: "Don Carlo," with Mirella Freni, Grace Bumbry, Placido Domingo, and Louis Quilico; James Levine. . . . ¶ Friday, March 4, at 8: "Adriana Lecouvreur," with Renata Scotto, Viorica Cortez, Neil Shicoff, and Mario Sereni; Thomas Fulton. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 5, at 2: "Arabella," with Kiri Te Kanawa, Kathleen Battle, David Rendall, and Bernd Weikl; Erich Leinsdorf. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 5, at 8: "La Bohème," with Linda Zoghby, Patricia Craig, Dano Raffanti, and Richard Stilwell; James Levine. . . . ¶ Monday, March 7, at 8: "Madame Butterfly," with Teresa Zylis-Gara, Claudia Catania, Ermanno Mauro, and Richard Fredricks; Eugene Kohn. . . . ¶ Tuesday, March 8, at 8: "La Bohème," with Linda Zoghby, Patricia Craig, Dano Raffanti, and Richard Stilwell; James Levine. (A nonsubscription performance.) . . . ¶ Wednesday, March 9, at 7: "Don Carlo," with Mirella Freni, Grace Bumbry, Placido Domingo, and Louis Quilico; James Levine. . . . ¶ Thursday, March 10, at 7:30: "Der Rosenkavalier," with Tatiana Troyanos, Kiri Te Kanawa, Judith Blegen, and Kurt Moll; James Levine. . . . ¶ Friday, March 11, at 8: "Madame Butterfly," with Teresa Zylis-Gara, Claudia Catania, Ermanno Mauro, and Richard Fredricks; Eugene Kohn. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 12, at 1: "La Bohème," with Linda Zoghby, Patricia Craig, Dano Raffanti, and Richard Stilwell; James Levine. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 12, at 7: "Don Carlo," with Mirella Freni, Grace Bumbry, Placido Domingo, and Louis Quilico; James Levine.

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ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall, Christoph von Dohnanyi conducting—Thursday and Friday, March 3-4, at 8, and Tuesday, March 8, at 7:30: A program of music by Beethoven, Mozart, Manfred Trojahn, and Richard Strauss, with Seymour Lipkin, piano. . . . ¶ Thursday, March 10, at 8; Friday, March 11, at 2; Saturday, March 12, at 8; and Tuesday, March 15, at 7:30: A Haydn-Henze-Dvořák program; no soloists.

Philadelphia Orchestra—André Previn conducting, with Vladimir Ashkenazy, piano. (Avery Fisher Hall. Wednesday, March 2, at 8.)

Toulouse Chamber Orchestra—With Michel Debost, flute. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, March 2, at 8.)

Brooklyn Philharmonic—Lukas Foss conducting. The third in a "Meet the Moderns" series of four concerts, this one a program of music by David Amram, William Hibbard, William Kraft, Faye-Ellen Silverman, Diana Greene, and Francis Thorne. With Susan Belling, soprano. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Friday, March 4, at 8. For information about tickets, call 254-6300, Ext. 205. . . . Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100. Saturday, March 5, at 8.) . . . ¶ A program of music by Mozart and Beethoven, and the New York première of Bernd Alois Zimmerman's "Concerto for Violin and Orchestra." With Christiane Edinger, violin. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100. Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, at 8, and Sunday, March 13, at 3.)

I Fiamminghi—Rudolf Werthen conducting this Belgian chamber orchestra in its first appearance here. With Miha Pogacnik, violin (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. Sunday, March 6, at 2. For information about tickets, cal 586-4680.)

American Symphony Orchestra—Paul Dunke conducting a program that includes the première of John La Montaine's "Symphonic Variations for Piano and Orchestra." With Randall Hodkinson, piano. (Carnegie Hall Sunday, March 6, at 3.)

Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields—Iona Brown conducting this English chamber orchestra. (Avery Fisher Hall. Sunday, March 6, at 8.)

Slovenian Symphony of Yugoslavia—Anton Nanut conducting an all-Brahms program, with James Dick, piano, in the orchestra's first appearance here. (Carnegie Hall. Monday March 7, at 8.)

National Symphony Orchestra—Mstislav Rostropovich conducting a Tchaikovsky-Shostakovich program, with Galina Vishnevskaya soprano, and Stafford Dean, bass. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, March 9, at 8.)

Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and Women's Chorus—Sergiu Comissiona directing, with Cho-Liang Lin, violin. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, March 12, at 8.)

Beethoven Society—Beethoven's "Missa Solemnis," performed by the New Haven Symphony Orchestra and the Cornell Chorale, with Lorna Haywood, soprano; Jan DeGaetani, mezzo-soprano; *Seth McCoy, tenor; and* David Arnold, baritone. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday March 5, at 3.)

Y Chamber Symphony—Henryk Szeryng conducting a program of Bach concertos and acting as violin soloist. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y. Tuesday and Wednesday, March 8-9, at 8.)

New York Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra—Raffael Adler conducting. (Merkin Concert Hall Abraham Goodman House. Wednesday March 9, at 8.)

Musica Aeterna Orchestra—Frederic Waldman conducting, with Håkan Hagegård, baritone and Jamao Fujiwara, Curtis Macomber, and Bruce Berg, all violin. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Saturday, March 12, at 8, and Sunday, March 13, at 6.)

Texas Boys Choir—Jack Noble White directing. (Carnegie Hall. Friday, March 4, at 8.)

Bach's "St. John Passion"—Johannes Somary directing the Amor Artis Baroque Consort and the Choir of St. Ignatius Loyola, with soloists. (Church of St. Ignatius Loyola, Park Ave. at 84th St. Friday, March 4, at 8. Tickets at the door on the evening of the performance.)

Canticum Novum Singers—Harold Rosenbaum directing a program of music by Josquin des Prés. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Saturday, March 12, at 8.)

Gregg Smith Singers—Gregg Smith directing a program called "An Odyssey in Space." (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Saturday, March 12, at 8:30. For information about tickets, call 865-7035.)

RECITALS

Elly Ameling—Soprano. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y. Wednesday, March 2, at 8.)

Alan Feinberg—Piano, in a program of twentieth-century music. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Wednesday, March 2, at 8.)

Guarneri Quartet—Chamber music. (Alice Tully

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Hall. Wednesday and Thursday, March 2-3, at 8.)

Kyung-Wha Chung—Violin. (Carnegie Hall. Thursday, March 3, at 8.)

Henry Herford—Baritone. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y. Thursday, March 3, at 8.)

Judith Alstadter—Piano. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Saturday, March 5, at 2.)

Yehudi Menuhin—Violin, in an all-Brahms program, with Andras Schiff, piano; Nathaniel Rosen, cello; and others. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, March 5, at 8.)

Joseph Kalichstein—Piano. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y. Saturday, March 5, at 8.)

Mozartean Players—Chamber music. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Saturday, March 5, at 8.)

Muir String Quartet—Chamber music. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. Sunday, March 6, at 2. For information about tickets, call 741-5689.)

Evelyne Crochet—Piano, in an all-Debussy program. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y. Sunday, March 6, at 3.)

William Bolcom and Joan Morris—Piano and mezzo-soprano. (Alice Tully Hall Sunday, March 6, at 3.)

Christa Ludwig and James Levine—Mezzo-soprano and piano, in Schubert's "Die Winterreise." (Metropolitan Opera House. Sunday, March 6, at 5.)

Josef Marx Memorial Concert—Patricia Spencer, flute; William Arrowsmith and Hester Furman, oboe; the Pierrot Consort; and others in a program that ranges from the baroque to the contemporary. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Sunday, March 6, at 8.)

Janis-Rozena Peri—Soprano. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Sunday, March 6, at 8:30.)

Paul Badura-Skoda—Piano, with the Little Orchestra Society conducted by Dino Anagnost. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Monday, March 7, at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

Timothy Paradise—Clarinet. (Alice Tully Hall. Monday, March 7, at 8.)

Leonard Raver—Organ, with assisting artists. (Church of the Ascension, Fifth Ave. at 10th St. Monday, March 7, at 8. Tickets at the door on the evening of the performance.)

Pierre Fournier—Cello. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Monday, March 7, at 8.)

Da Capo Chamber Players—With Judith Bettina, soprano; RoseMarie Freni, mezzo-soprano; and Daniel Druckman, percussion. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Monday, March 7, at 8.)

Hélène Wickett—Piano. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Tuesday, March 8, at 8.)

Quintessential Brass—Chamber music. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Tuesday, March 8, at 8.)

Leon Bates—Piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, March 9, at 8.)

Concert Royal—The first in a series of three concerts, this one entitled "Artistry of the Baroque Flute." (St. Thomas Church, Fifth Ave. at 53rd St. Wednesday, March 9, at 7:30. Tickets at the door on the evening of the performance.)

André Watts—Piano. (Carnegie Hall. Thursday, March 10, at 8.)

Hilda Harris—Mezzo-soprano. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, March 10, at 8.)

Youri Egorov—Piano, in a Chopin-Schumann program. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Thursday, March 10, at 8.)

Stephen Bishop-Kovacevich—Piano. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y. Thursday, March 10, at 8.)

Paco Peña—Flamenco guitarist. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Thursday, March 10, at 8.)

Andres Segovia—Classical guitarist. (Avery Fisher Hall. Friday, March 11, at 8.)

Benjamin Verdery and Rie Schmidt—Classical guitarist and flute. (CAMI Hall, 165 W. 57th St. Friday, March 11, at 8. For information about tickets, call 757-3255.)

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Beaux Arts Trio—Chamber music. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Friday, March 11, at 8.)

Sylvan Wind Quintet—With Randy Ellis, oboe. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Friday, March 11, at 8. For information about tickets, call 663-8339.)

Bach Winterfest—A program of music by J. S. Bach and his sons C. P. E. Bach and W. F. Bach, performed by Elaine Comparone, harpsichord. (St. Joseph's Church, 371 Sixth Ave. Friday, March 11, at 8:30, and a repeat performance at St. Michael's Church, 225 W. 99th St., on Saturday, March 12, at 8:30. For information about tickets, call 666-9427.)

Kimball Wheeler—Mezzo-soprano, in a one-hour program of songs by William Hawley, Paul Suits, and others. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Saturday, March 12, at 5. For information about tickets, call 865-7035.)

Heidi Lehwalder and Paula Robison—Harp and flute. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y. Saturday, March 12, at 8.)

St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble—A program of music for winds and strings. With Joseph Anderer, horn. (St. Joseph's Church, 371 Sixth Ave. Saturday, March 12, at 8. For information about tickets, call 226-1115.)

Continuum—A program of contemporary piano music, performed by Cheryl Seltzer, Joel Sachs, and Don Gillespie, with Victoria Villamil, soprano, and percussion and electronic accompaniment. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, March 12, at 8.)

SPORTS

(The box-office number for Madison Square Garden is 564-4400.)

Professional Basketball—At **madison square garden** (all games at 7:30): Knicks vs. Boston, Saturday, March 5. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Seattle, Tuesday, March 8. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Portland, Saturday, March 12. . . . **byrne meadowlands arena** (1-201 935-8888): Nets vs. Houston, Wednesday, March 2, at 7:35. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Philadelphia, Sunday, March 6, at noon. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Knicks, Wednesday, March 9, at 7:35. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Boston, Friday, March 11, at 7:35.

Gymnastics—McDonald's American Cup Gymnastics Championships. (Madison Square Garden. Saturday and Sunday, March 5-6, at noon.)

Hockey—At **madison square garden:** Rangers vs. Washington Capitals, Thursday, March 3, at 7:35. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Devils, Sunday, March 6, at 8:05. . . . **nassau coliseum**: Islanders vs. Toronto Maple Leafs, Thursday, March 3, at 8:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Devils, Saturday, March 5, at 8:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Washington Capitals, Saturday, March 12, at 5:05. (Hempstead Turnpike, Uniondale, L.I. 1-516 794-9100.) . . . **byrne meadowlands arena** (1-201 935-3900): Devils vs. Philadelphia Flyers, Thursday, March 3. . . . ¶ Devils vs. Washington Capitals, Tuesday, March 8. . . . ¶ Devils vs. Hartford Whalers, Thursday, March 10. (Games begin at 7:35.)

Racing—At **aqueduct:** Mondays and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 1, and Sundays at 1:05; through Monday, May 16. The Swift, Saturday, March 5; the Correction Handicap, Sunday, March 6; and the Toboggan Handicap, Saturday, March 12. . . . **bowie,** Md.: Weekdays at 1; through Tuesday, March 15. The Barbara Fritchie Handicap, Saturday, March 5, and the John B. Campbell Handicap, Saturday, March 12.

Trotting—At **roosevelt raceway,** Westbury: Weeknights at 8; through Saturday, April 2. . . . **meadowlands:** Weeknights at 8; through Tuesday, Aug. 9.

ET ALIA

Poetry and Prose Readings—Sheila Ballantyne and Joyce Maynard reading from their own fiction. (Manhattan Theatre Club, 321 E. 73rd St. 472-0600. Monday, March 7, at 8.) . . . ¶ Lisel Mueller and Constance Urdang reading from their own poetry. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Monday, March 7, at 8.) . . . ¶ Carolyn Forché and Marilyn Hacker reading from their own poetry. (Donnell Library Auditorium, 20 W. 53rd St. Thursday, March 10, at 6. No tickets necessary.)

Cat Show—Empire Cat Club. (Madison Square Garden Exposition Rotunda, Seventh Ave. at 32nd St. Saturday and Sunday, March 5-6, from 10 to 6:30.)

Flower Show—The Spring Flower Show of the Horticultural Society of New York, 128 W. 58th St. Friday, March 11, from 10:30 to 7; Saturday, March 12, from 10:30 to 6; and Sunday, March 13, from 10:30 to 5.)

Auctions—At **sotheby's**, York Ave. at 72nd St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 9:30 to 5; Sunday, March 6, from 1 to 5.) Thursday and Friday, March 10-11, at 10:15 and 2: Old Master and nineteenth- and twentieth-century prints. Exhibition starts Saturday, March 5. . . . **christie's**, Park Ave. at 59th St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.) Wednesday, March 9, at 10 and 2: American and European prints. Exhibition starts Thursday, March 3. . . . **phillips,** 406 E. 79th St. (Exhibition hours: Weekdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.) Thursday, March 10, at 11: Furniture, silver, Oriental art, and decorations. Exhibition starts Saturday, March 5.

COMING EVENTS

(A listing for forehanded readers.)

Baseball—First league games here—**mets** at Shea Stadium: Vs. Philadelphia, April 5 and 7 (both day games). . . . ¶ St. Louis, April 8 (night), April 9 (d), and April 10 (day doubleheader). . . . **yankees** at Yankee Stadium: Vs. Detroit, April 12 (day game) and April 13-14 (night).

Professional Basketball—The Knicks at **madison square garden:** March 15 (Atlanta), March 19 (Washington), March 22 (Philadelphia), March 26 (Milwaukee), April 5 (Detroit), and April 8 (San Antonio). . . . ¶ The Nets at **byrne meadowlands arena:** March 13 (Portland), March 15 (Detroit), March 23 (Utah), March 26 (Atlanta), March 30 (Washington), April 2 (Milwaukee), April 6 (Indiana), and April 9 (Cleveland).

Boxing—Golden Gloves New York City finals. (Madison Square Garden. March 18.)

Golf—Masters Tournament. (Augusta National Golf Club, Augusta, Ga. April 7-10.)

Hockey—The Rangers at **madison square garden:** March 14 (Philadelphia), March 16 (Islanders), March 20 (Boston), March 27 (Washington), and April 1 (Devils). . . . ¶ The Islanders at **nassau coliseum:** March 19 (Philadelphia), March 22 (Boston), March 26

(Rangers), and April 2 (Pittsburgh). . . . ¶ The Devils at BYRNE MEADOWLANDS ARENA: March 14 (Calgary), March 17 (Islanders), March 21 (Rangers), March 25 (Philadelphia), and March 31 (Buffalo). . . . STANLEY CUP PLAYOFFS: Start Wednesday, April 6.

Karate—All-American Open Karate Championships. (Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden. March 19.)

Racing—At Aintree, England: The Grand National Steeplechase, April 9.

Tennis—Virginia Slims Championships of New York. (Madison Square Garden. March 23-27.)

Trotting—At Yonkers Raceway: April 4-June 16.

Music—METROPOLITAN OPERA (362-6000): The season continues through April 16. . . . AVERY FISHER HALL (874-2424): The New York Philharmonic season continues through May 21. . . . ¶ Alicia de Larrocha, piano, March 13. . . . ¶ Maurizio Pollini, piano, March 18. . . . ¶ Dresden Staatskapelle, March 20. . . . ¶ Jean-Pierre Rampal, flute, March 20. . . . ¶ Murray Perahia, piano, March 27. . . . ¶ New Irish Chamber Orchestra, March 27. . . . ¶ Musica Sacra, March 30. . . . CARNEGIE HALL (247-7459): New Irish Chamber Orchestra, March 13. . . . ¶ Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, March 14 and 21. . . . ¶ Dresden Staatskapelle, March 16. . . . ¶ Prague Chamber Orchestra, March 17. . . . ¶ I Solisti Aquilani, March 18. . . . ¶ Vladimir Ashkenazy, piano, March 19. . . . ¶ Vienna Choir Boys, March 20. . . . ¶ John Browning, piano, March 20. . . . ¶ Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, March 22. . . . ¶ American Orchestra da Camera, March 23. . . . ¶ Maurizio Pollini, piano, March 24. . . . ¶ Hartford Symphony Orchestra, March 25. . . . ¶ Carlos Montoya, flamenco guitarist, March 26. . . . ¶ Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, March 27. . . . ¶ Krystian Zimerman, piano, March 30. . . . ¶ Emanuel Ax, piano, and Yo-Yo Ma, cello, March 31. . . . ¶ Philippe Entremont, piano, April 2. . . . ¶ American Symphony Orchestra, April 3 and 7. . . . ¶ Ensemble Instrumental de France, April 4. . . . ¶ Philadelphia Orchestra, April 5. . . . ¶ New York Pops, April 8. . . . ¶ Charles Rosen, piano, April 10. . . . ¶ Joseph Fuchs, violin, April 10. . . . ALICE TULLY HALL (362-1911): Music from Marlboro, March 14. . . . ¶ Benita Valente, soprano, and Richard Goode, piano, March 15. . . . ¶ Ensemble for Early Music's Grand Bande, March 19. . . . ¶ Garrick Ohlsson, piano, March 20. . . . ¶ Natan Brand, piano, March 22. . . . ¶ Lynn Harrell, cello, March 27. . . . ¶ Anthony Newman, harpsichord and organ, March 27. . . . ¶ Concert Royal, March 30. . . . ¶ Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, April 1 and 3 and April 10-12. . . . ¶ Guarneri Quartet, April 6-7. . . . KAUFMANN CONCERT HALL, 92nd Street Y (427-4410): Y Chamber Symphony, March 19-20. . . . ¶ John Cheek, baritone, and James Levine, piano, March 21. . . . ¶ Chamber Music at the Y, March 22-23. . . . ¶ Rudolf Firkusny, piano, March 27. . . . ¶ Lorin Hollander, piano, April 2. . . . GRACE RAINEY ROGERS AUDITORIUM, Metropolitan Museum (570-3949): Music from Marlboro, March 17. . . . ¶ Guarneri Quartet, March 19. . . . ¶ Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra, March 24 and April 7. . . . ¶ Yefim Bronfman, piano, March 31. . . . ¶ Waverly Consort, April 9.

Theatre—Some productions scheduled to open during the next several weeks: A new Neil Simon comedy, "Brighton Beach Memoirs," which will feature Matthew Broderick, Elizabeth Franz, and Joyce Van Patten, among others. . . . ¶ Anne Pitoniak and Kathy Bates in a two-character play by Marsha Norman, "Night, Mother," originally produced at the American Repertory Theatre, in Cambridge, Mass. . . . ¶ A limited engagement of George Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess" will be presented at Radio City Music Hall. . . . ¶ Robert Drivas will star in a new play by Edward Albee, "The Man Who Had Three Arms."

Dance—At the City Center: Merce Cunningham Dance Company, March 15-27. . . . ¶ Paul Taylor Dance Company, April 5-May 1.

Other Dates—St. Patrick's Day is Thursday, March 17. . . . ¶ The first day of spring is March 20. . . . ¶ The Circus, at Madison Square Garden, March 29-June 5. . . . ¶ Easter Sunday is April 3. . . . ¶ Federal, New York State, and New York City income-tax returns for 1982 and estimates for 1983 are due Friday, April 15.

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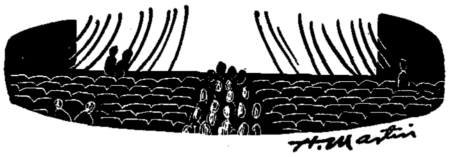

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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 28.

EAST SIDE

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
March 2: "Babo 73" (1964; directed by Robert Downey); "Hold Me While I'm Naked" (1966; George Kuchar); and "Hallelujah the Hills" (1963; Adolfas Mekas), with Peter H. Beard.
March 3-4: "The Brig" (1966; Jonas Mekas); and "Come Back, Africa" (1960; Lionel Rogosin), a semidocumentary film.
March 5-6: "David Holzman's Diary" (1969; Jim McBride), with L. M. Kit Carson; and "Portrait of Jason" (1967; Shirley Clarke).
From March 8: "The Honeymoon Killers" (†); and "You Are Not I" (1981; Sara Driver).

R.K.O. Century Art, 36 E. 8th. (473-7014)
"Tootsie" (†).

St. Marks Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 8th. (533-9292)
Through March 3: "Smithereens" (Susan Seidelman), with Susan Berman; and "Shoot the Moon" (†).
March 4-10: "Time Stands Still" (Péter Gothár; in Hungarian); and "Hester Street" (†).
From March 11: To be announced.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
Through March 3: "The Sting II" (Jeremy Paul Kagan), with Jackie Gleason and Mac Davis.
From March 4: "Victor/Victoria" (†) and "My Favorite Year" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
Through March 3: "E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial" (†).
From March 4: "Table for Five" (Robert Lieberman), with Jon Voight.

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
"Lovesick" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "The Lords of Discipline" (Franc Roddam), with David Keith and Robert Prosky.
Theatre 2: "Tootsie" (†).
Theatre 3: "Sophie's Choice" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"48 Hrs." (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
Through March 10: "The Road Warrior" (†).
From March 11: "Starstruck" (Gillian Armstrong; an Australian film), with Jo Kennedy.

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"Table for Five" (Robert Lieberman), with Jon Voight.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"The Verdict" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
Through March 3: "Diva" (†).
From March 4: "Britannia Hospital" (Lindsay Anderson), with Leonard Rossiter and Graham Crowden.

Manhattan I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "The Year of Living Dangerously" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sophie's Choice" (†).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "48 Hrs." (†).
Theatre 2: "The King of Comedy" (†).

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Coup de Torchon" (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: "Local Hero" (Bill Forsyth), with Peter Riegert.
Theatre 2: "Betrayal" (David Jones), with Jeremy Irons and Ben Kingsley.

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: Through March 10: "Lovesick" (†). From March 11: "Tales of Ordinary Madness" (Marco Ferreri), with Ben Gazzara.
Theatre 2: Through March 3: "The Sting II" (Jeremy Paul Kagan), with Jackie Gleason and Mac Davis. From March 4: "The Verdict" (†).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Frances" (Graeme Clifford), with Jessica Lange and Sam Shepard.

Loews New York Twin I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Tootsie" (†).
Theatre 2: "E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
Through March 10: "Das Boot" (†).
From March 11: "Say Amen, Somebody" (George Nierenberg), a documentary on gospel music.

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
Through March 3: "Without a Trace" (Stanley Jaffe), with Kate Nelligan and Judd Hirsch.
From March 4: "Tender Mercies" (Bruce Beresford), with Robert Duvall.

72nd Street East, 1st Ave. at 72nd. (288-9304)
"An Officer and a Gentleman" (†).

U. A. 85th St. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
Through March 3: "The Sting II" (Jeremy Paul Kagan), with Jackie Gleason and Mac Davis.
March 4-10: "Missing" (†).
From March 11: "Joystick."

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "The Lords of Discipline" (Franc Roddam), with David Keith and Robert Prosky.
Theatre 2: Through March 3: "The Entity" (Sidney J. Furie), with Barbara Hershey and Ron Silver. From March 4: "Vigilante."

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
"Sophie's Choice" (†).

R.K.O. Century 86th St. Twin, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Theatre 1: "Table for Five" (Robert Lieberman), with Jon Voight.
Theatre 2: "The Year of Living Dangerously" (†).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through March 8: "Poetry in Motion" (directed by Ron Mann), a documentary. From March 9: "Johnny West" (1977; Roald Koller; in German), with Rio Reiser.
Theatre 2: Through March 8: "Provincial Actors" (1979; Agnieszka Holland; in Polish). From March 9: "The Constant Factor" (1980; Krzysztof Zanussi; in Polish).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Hollywood Out-Takes & Rare Footage."
Theatre 2: "Kamikaze '89" (Wolf Gremm; in German), with Rainer Werner Fassbinder.

Greenwich Playhouse I and 2, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Sophie's Choice" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sophie's Choice" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Frances" (Graeme Clifford), with Jessica Lange and Sam Shepard.
Theatre 2: "Frances."
Theatre 3: "The Year of Living Dangerously" (†).
Theatre 4: Through March 3: "Street Music." From March 4 (tentative): "Coup de Torchon" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Parsifal" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Gandhi" (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
Through March 3: "Jour de Fête" (†).
March 4-10: "Playtime" (†).
From March 11: "Mr. Hulot's Holiday" (†).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"The Gift" (Michel Lang; in French), with Clio Goldsmith and Pierre Mondy.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Sophie's Choice" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Tootsie" (†).

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "The Night of the Shooting Stars" (†).
Theatre 2: "La Nuit de Varennes" (Ettore Scola; in French), with Harvey Keitel and Marcello Mastroianni.
Theatre 3: "The Stationmaster's Wife" (1977; Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Kurt Raab.

Cinema Studio I and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: Through March 3: "Winter Kills" (†). From March 4: "Diva" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Pirates of Penzance" (Wilford Leach), with Kevin Kline and Linda Ronstadt.

Embassy 72nd St. I and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: Through March 5: "Das Boot" (†). From March 6: "Choice of Arms" (Alain Corneau; in French), with Yves Montand and Gérard Depardieu.
Theatre 2: "Lianna" (John Sayles).

Loews 83rd Quad, B'way at 83rd. (877-3190)
Theatre 1: Through March 10: "Lovesick" (†). From March 11: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through March 10: "Sophie's Choice" (†). From March 11: To be announced.
Theatre 3: Through March 10: "The Year of Living Dangerously" (†). From March 11: To be announced.
Theatre 4: Through March 10: "Tootsie" (†). From March 11: To be announced.

New Yorker I and 2, B'way at 88th. (580-7900)
Theatre 1: "The Verdict" (†).
Theatre 2: "Frances" (Graeme Clifford), with Jessica Lange and Sam Shepard.

Olympia Quad, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: Through March 3: "The Dark Crystal" (Jim Henson and Frank Oz). From March 4: "Victor/Victoria" (†) and "My Favorite Year" (†).
Theatre 2: Through March 3: "One Dark Night." From March 4: "Missing" (†).
Theatre 3: Through March 3: "The Entity" (Sidney J. Furie), with Barbara Hershey and Ron Silver. From March 4: "Time Stands Still" (Péter Gothár; in Hungarian).
Theatre 4: Through March 3: "The Sting II" (Jeremy Paul Kagan), with Jackie Gleason and Mac Davis; and "Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid" (Carl Reiner), with Steve Martin and Rachel Ward. From March 4: "Vigilante."

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Theatres, B'way at 44th. (582-1795)
Theatre 1: "The Entity" (directed by Sidney J. Furie), with Barbara Hershey and Ron Silver.
Theatre 2: "Table for Five" (Robert Lieberman), with Jon Voight.
Theatre 3: "Sophie's Choice" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Dark Crystal" (Jim Henson and Frank Oz).
Theatre 5: "The Verdict" (†).
Theatre 6: "Caligula" (1980), with Malcolm McDowell.

Embassy I, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
"48 Hrs." (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, B'way at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "48 Hrs." (†).
Theatre 3: Through March 3: "Das Boot" (†). From March 4: "Victor/Victoria" (†) and "My Favorite Year" (†).
Theatre 4: "An Officer and a Gentleman" (†).

Loews Astor Plaza, B'way at 44th. (869-8340)

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Photographed aboard the S.S. Norway.

Ms. Hutton's gown is by Bob Mackie Originals.
On her eyes Aquamarine/Roseshell eyeshadow; on her lips Roseshell lipstick.
Her perfume, Ciara.

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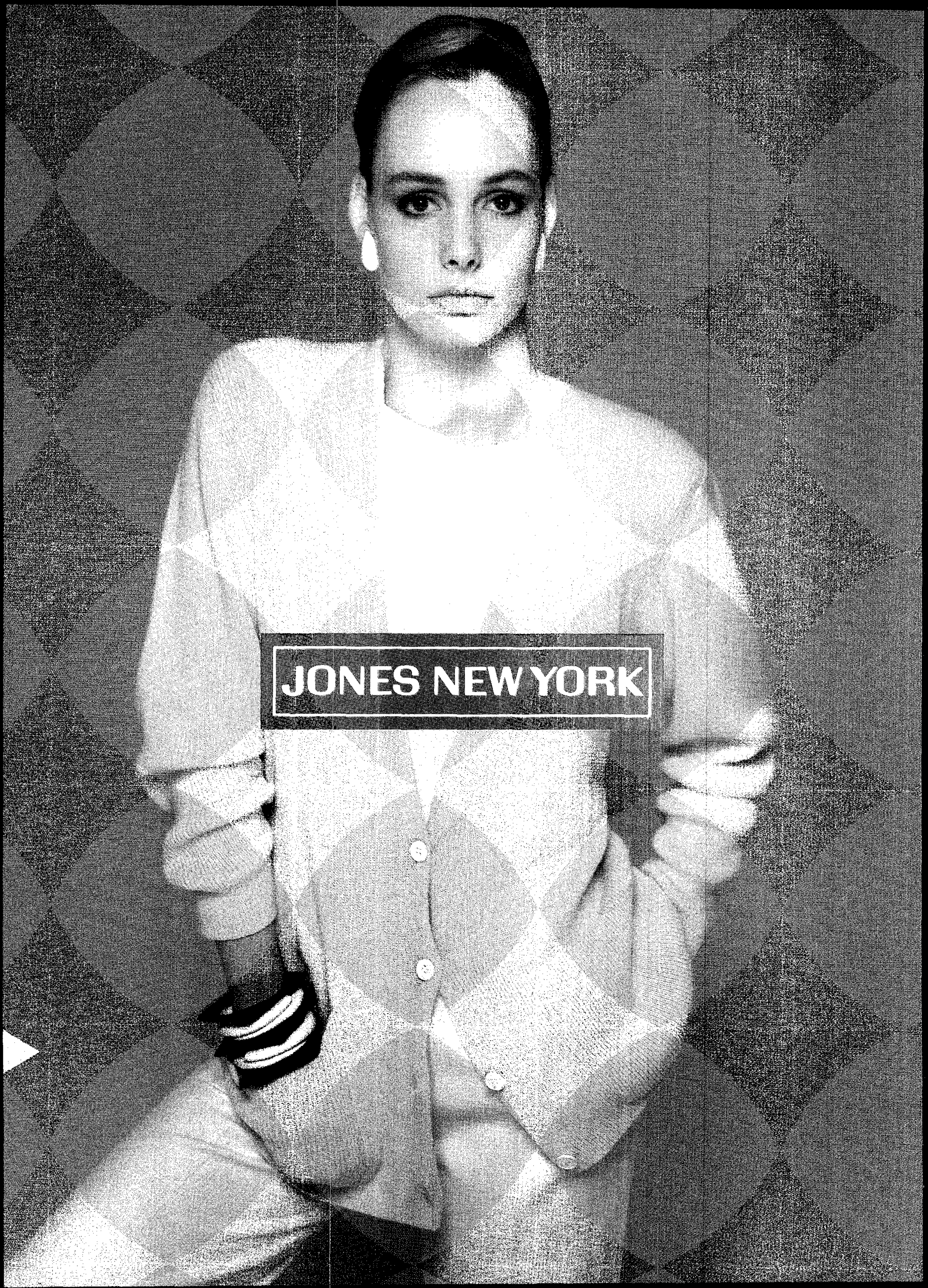
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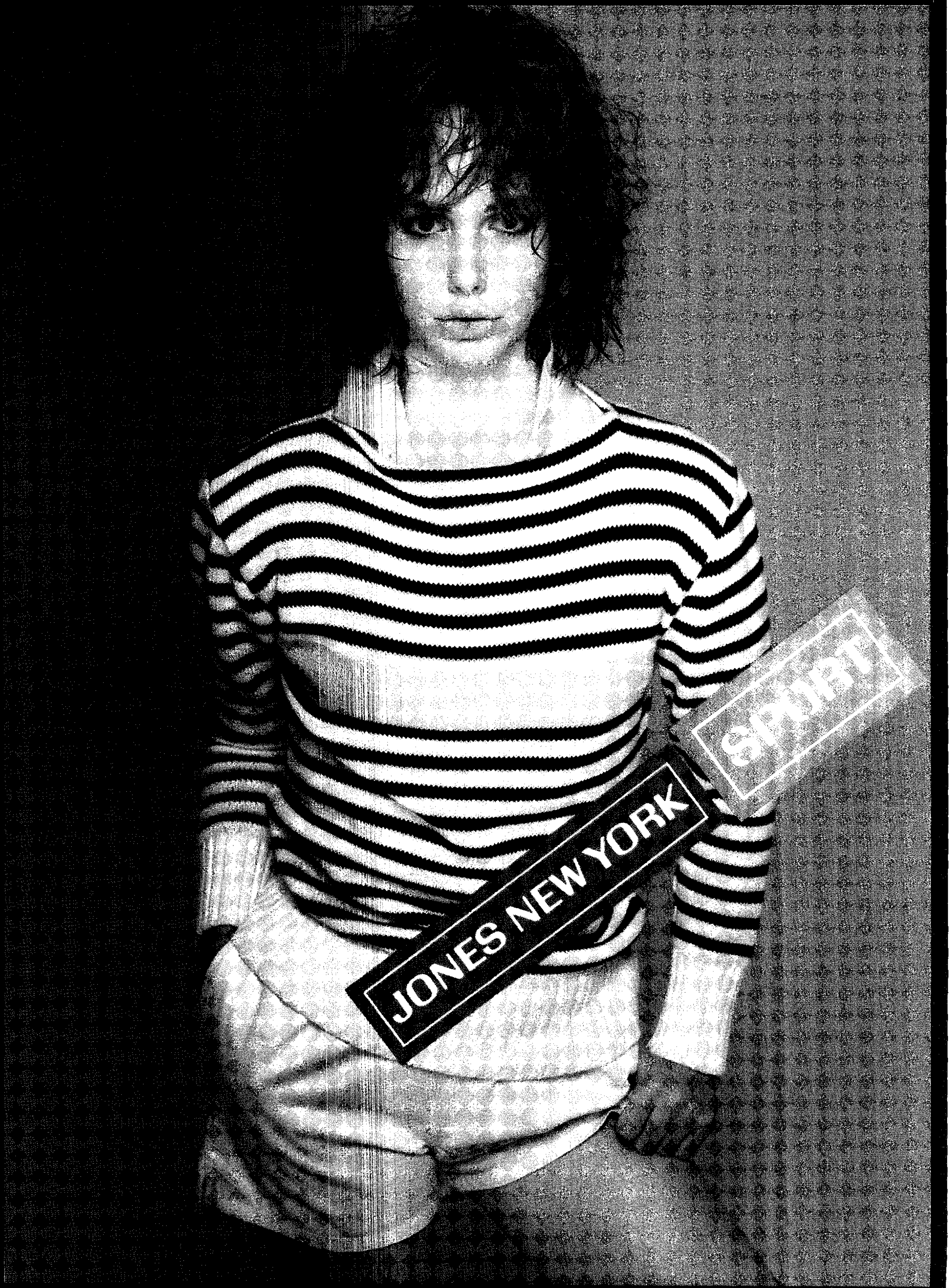
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

"Let's Spend the Night Together" (Hal Ashby), with The Rolling Stones.

Loews State 1 and 2, B'way at 45th. (582-5060)

Theatre 1: "The Lords of Discipline" (Franc Roddam), with David Keith and Robert Prosky.

Theatre 2: Through March 3: "Without a Trace" (Stanley Jaffe), with Kate Nelligan and Judd Hirsch. From March 4: "The Man from Snowy River" (George Miller), with Kirk Douglas and Jack Thompson.

Movieland, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)

"E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial" (†).

New Embassy 49th Street, Seventh Ave. at 49th. (757-7003)

"The Pirates of Penzance" (Wilford Leach), with Kevin Kline and Linda Ronstadt.

Rivoli 1 and 2, B'way at 49th. (247-1633)

Theatre 1: Through March 3: "Sorceress." From March 4: "Vigilante."

Theatre 2: Through March 10: "The Road Warrior" (†). From March 11: "10 to Midnight" (J. Lee Thompson), with Charles Bronson.

R.K.O. Century Cinerama Twin, B'way at 47th. (975-8366/8369)

Theatre 1: "The Year of Living Dangerously" (†).

Theatre 2: "One Dark Night."

R.K.O. Century National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: Through March 3: "The Sting II" (Jeremy Paul Kagan), with Jackie Gleason and Mac Davis. From March 4: To be announced.

Theatre 2: "Lovesick" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Agee Room, 144 Bleecker St. (473-8306; theatre opens in the late afternoon.)

Through March 3: "America—From Hitler to MX" (1983; directed by Joan Harvey), a documentary.

March 4-10: "Land of Look Behind" (1982; Alan Greenberg), with Gregory Isaacs.

March 11-12: "The Nutty Professor" (†); and "Hollywood or Bust" (1956; Frank Tashlin), with Dean Martin, Jerry Lewis, and Anita Ekberg.

Bleecker St. Cinema, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)

"The State of Things" (1983; Wim Wenders).

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. at 57th. (757-2131)

Through March 10: "Private Life" (Yuli Raisman; in Russian).

From March 11: "Victory March."

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

Through March 3: "Taxi Zum Klo" (1981; Frank Ripploh; in German); and "Score" (1974; Radley Metzger), with Calvin Culver and Gerald Grant.

March 4-5: "King of Hearts" (1967; Philippe de Broca; in French and English), with Alan Bates and Geneviève Bujold; and "Harold and Maude" (1971; Hal Ashby), with Ruth Gordon and Bud Cort.

March 6-8: "A Streetcar Named Desire" (1951; Elia Kazan), with Vivien Leigh, Marlon Brando, Kim Hunter, and Karl Malden; and "The Fugitive Kind" (1960; Sidney Lumet), with Marlon Brando, Anna Magnani, and Joanne Woodward.

March 9-10: "The Rose" (1979; Mark Rydell), with Bette Midler, Alan Bates, and Frederic Forrest; and "Piaf—The Early Years" (1974; Guy Casaril; in French), with Brigitte Ariel.

March 11-12: "1900" (1977; Bernardo Bertolucci), with Robert De Niro, Burt Lancaster, Donald Sutherland, Dominique Sanda, Sterling Hayden, and Gérard Depardieu.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)

Through March 3: "The Pirates of Penzance" (1983; Wilford Leach), with Kevin Kline and Linda Ronstadt.

From March 4: To be announced.

Hollywood Twin Cinema 1, 8th Ave. at 47th. (246-0717)

March 2: "One-Eyed Jacks" (1961; Marlon Brando), with Brando, Karl Malden, and Katy Jurado; and "Viva Zapata!" (1952; Elia Kazan), with Marlon Brando, Jean Peters, and Anthony Quinn.

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March 3: A program of new films.

March 4-5: "Dr. No" (1963; Terence Young) and "From Russia with Love" (1964; Terence Young), both films with Sean Connery as James Bond.

March 6-7: "Fortune and Men's Eyes" (1971; Harvey Hart), with Wendell Burton and Michael Greer; and "Short Eyes" (1977; Robert M. Young), with Bruce Davison and José Perez.

March 8-9: "Moby Dick" (†) and "Billy Budd" (†).

March 10-12: "Taxi Driver" (1976; Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro, Harvey Keitel, Cybill Shepherd, and Jodie Foster; and "Mean Streets" (†).

Hollywood Twin Cinema 2, 8th Ave. at 47th. (246-0717)

Through March 3: "Baby Doll" (1956; Elia Kazan), with Karl Malden, Carroll Baker, and Eli Wallach; and "The Bad Seed" (1956; Mervyn Le Roy), with Nancy Kelly and Patty McCormack.

March 4-5: "West Side Story" (1961; Robert Wise), with Natalie Wood, Richard Beymer, Russ Tamblyn, Rita Moreno, and George Chakiris; and "Splendor in the Grass" (1961; Elia Kazan), with Natalie Wood, Warren Beatty, and Pat Hingle.

March 6: "Sweet Charity" (†).

March 7-8: "The Jolson Story" (†); and "Jolson Sings Again" (1949; Henry Levin), with Larry Parks and Barbara Hale.

March 9-10: "The Country Girl" (1954; George Seaton), with Bing Crosby, Grace Kelly, and William Holden; and "The Farmer's Daughter" (†).

March 11-12: "Goldfinger" (1964; Guy Hamilton) and "Thunderball" (1965; Terence Young), both with Sean Connery as James Bond.

Metro Cinema, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

March 2: "Barravento" (1962; Glauber Rocha; a Brazilian film, in Portuguese); and "Tent of Miracles" (1977; Nelson Pereira dos Santos; a Brazilian film, in Portuguese).

March 3: "Ikiru" (1952; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Takashi Shimura; and "I Live in Fear" (1955; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune.

March 4: "Andrei Roublev" (1969; Andrei Tarkovsky; in Russian).

March 5: "Gaslight" (1944; George Cukor), with Charles Boyer, Ingrid Bergman, Joseph Cotten, Angela Lansbury, and Dame May Whitty; and "Notorious" (1946; Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant, Ingrid Bergman, Claude Rains, and Louis Calhern.

March 6: "Lawrence of Arabia" (1962; David Lean), with Peter O'Toole, Alec Guinness, Omar Sharif, José Ferrer, and Anthony Quinn.

March 7: "Five Easy Pieces" (1970; Bob Rafelson), with Jack Nicholson; and "The Postman Always Rings Twice" (1981; Bob Rafelson), with Jack Nicholson and Jessica Lange.

March 8: "Only Angels Have Wings" (1939; Howard Hawks), with Jean Arthur and Cary Grant; and "The More the Merrier" (†).

March 9: "The American Friend" (1977; Wim Wenders), with Dennis Hopper and Bruno Ganz; and "Black and White Like Day and Night" (1981; Wolfgang Petersen; in German), with Bruno Ganz.

March 10: "Throne of Blood" (1957) and "The Lower Depths" (1957), both films in Japanese, directed by Akira Kurosawa, with Toshiro Mifune.

March 11: "Marius" (†) and "Fanny" (†).

March 12: "Aguirre, the Wrath of God" (1972; Werner Herzog; in German); and "Stroszek" (1977; Werner Herzog; in German and English), with Bruno S. and Eva Mattes.

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

March 2: "Prince Igor" (1972; in Russian), performed by the Kirov Opera and the Ballet of Leningrad; and "The Queen of Spades" (1960; Roman Tikhomirov; in Russian), performed by the Bolshoi Theatre company.

March 3-5: "Rhapsody in Blue" (1945; Irving Rapper), with Joan Leslie, Robert Alda, Alexis Smith, Oscar Levant, and Paul Whiteman; and "Night and Day" (1946; Michael Curtiz), with Cary Grant, Alexis Smith, and Monty Woolley.

March 6-7: "The Great Caruso" (1951; Richard Thorpe), with Mario Lanza, Dorothy Kirsten, and Ann Blyth; and "A Lady's Morals" (†).

March 8-9: "Luna" (1979; Bernardo Bertolucci), with Jill Clayburgh and Matthew Barry; and "Death in Venice" (1971; Luchino Visconti), with Dirk Bogarde.

March 10-12: "Song Without End" (1960; George Cukor and Charles Vidor), with Dirk Bogarde, Capucine, and Geneviève Page; and "A Song to Remember" (1945; Charles Vidor), with Merle Oberon, Cornel Wilde, and Paul Muni.

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)

March 2: "Double Indemnity" (1944; Billy Wilder), with Barbara Stanwyck, Fred MacMurray, and Edward G. Robinson; "Cry Danger" (1951; Robert Parrish), with Dick Powell and Rhonda Fleming; and "Lady Scarface" (1941; Frank Woodruff), with Judith Anderson and Dennis O'Keefe.

March 3: "King Kong" (1932; Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack), with Fay Wray, Robert Armstrong, and Bruce Cabot; and "Bird of Paradise" (1932; King Vidor), with Dolores Del Rio and Joel McCrea.

March 4-5: "Norma Rae" (1979; Martin Ritt), with Sally Field, Ron Leibman, and Beau Bridges; and "Wise Blood" (1980; John Huston), with Brad Dourif, Ned Beatty, Harry Dean Stanton, and Amy Wright.

March 6: "Love and Anarchy" (†); and "The Seduction of Mimi" (1972; Lina Wertmüller; in Italian), with Giancarlo Giannini.

I. VanRynbach

March 7: "Hamlet" (†).

March 8: "Cobra Woman" (†); and "The Adventures of Hajji Baba" (1954; Don Weis), with Elaine Stewart and John Derek.

March 9: "Ministry of Fear" (1945; Fritz Lang), with Ray Milland, Marjorie Reynolds, and Dan Duryea; "House by the River" (1950; Fritz Lang), with Louis Hayward, Jane Wyatt, Lee Bowman, and Dorothy Patrick; and "Strange Impersonation" (1946; Anthony Mann), with Brenda Marshall and William Gargan.

March 10: "Monty Python Live at the Hollywood Bowl" (1982), a concert film; and "And Now for Something Completely Different" (1972), selected skits from the BBC-TV series "Monty Python's Flying Circus."

March 11-12: "Elisa, Vida Mia" (1977; Carlos Saura; in Spanish), with Fernando Rey and Geraldine Chaplin; and "Cría!" (1977; Carlos Saura; in Spanish), with Geraldine Chaplin and Ana Torrent.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

March 2: "The General" (1926; Buster Keaton and Clyde Bruckman), with Keaton, Marian Mack, and Glenn Cavender; and "Steamboat Bill, Jr." (1927; Charles Riesner), with Buster Keaton, Marion Byron, and Tom Lewis.

March 3: "Conquest" (1937; Clarence Brown), with Greta Garbo and Charles Boyer; and "Susan Lenox, Her Fall and Rise" (1931; Robert Z. Leonard), with Greta Garbo and Clark Gable.

March 4: "Dial M for Murder" (1954; Alfred Hitchcock), with Ray Milland, Grace Kelly, Robert Cummings, Anthony Dawson, and John Williams; and "I Confess" (1953; Alfred Hitchcock), with Montgomery Clift, Anne Baxter, Karl Malden, and Brian Aherne.

March 5: "Breathless" (1959; Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Jean Seberg and Jean-Paul Belmondo; and "Band of Outsiders" (1964; Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Anna Karina and Sami Frey.

March 6: "The Philadelphia Story" (1940; George Cukor), with Katharine Hepburn, James Stewart, Cary Grant, and Ruth Hussey; and "A Bill of Divorcement" (†).

March 7: "Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon" (1943) and "The Woman in Green" (1945), two films in the Basil Rathbone–Nigel Bruce Holmes-Watson series, both directed by Roy William Neill.

March 8: "The Great Lie" (1941; Edmund Goulding), with Bette Davis, George Brent, and Mary Astor; and "The Old Maid" (†).

March 9: "All That Jazz" (1979; Bob Fosse), with Roy Scheider, Jessica Lange, Ann Reinking, and Leland Palmer; and "The Pajama Game" (1957; George Abbott and Stanley Donen), with Doris Day, John Raitt, Carol Haney, and Eddie Foy.

March 10: "The Man Who Knew Too Much" (1935; Alfred Hitchcock), with Leslie Banks, Edna Best, Pierre Fresnay, and Peter Lorre; and "Secret Agent" (†).

March 11: "The Country Girl" (1954; George Seaton), with Bing Crosby, Grace Kelly, and William Holden; and "To Catch a Thief" (1955; Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant, Grace Kelly, Jessie Royce Landis, Charles Vanel, and Brigitte Auber.

March 12: "Jamaica Inn" (†); and "Shadow of a Doubt" (1942; Alfred Hitchcock), with Teresa Wright, Joseph Cotten, Patricia Collinge, Hume Cronyn, and Henry Travers.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Auditorium II, 18 W. 54th St. (708-9490)—March 3 at 2:30: "Father of the Bride" (1950; directed by Vincente Minnelli), with Spencer Tracy, Elizabeth Taylor, and Joan Bennett. . . . ¶ March 3 at 6 and March 4 at 2:30: "The Bad and the Beautiful" (1952; Vincente Minnelli), with Kirk Douglas, Lana Turner, Dick Powell, Walter Pidgeon, and Gloria Grahame. . . . ¶ March 4 at 6: "Meet Me in St. Louis" (1944; Vincente Minnelli), with Judy Garland, Margaret O'Brien, Mary Astor, and Leon Ames. . . . ¶ March 5 at noon: "Tol'able David" (1921; Henry King; a silent film), with Richard Barthelmess, Gladys Hulette, and Ernest Torrence. . . . ¶ March 5 at 2:30: "Ménilmontant" (1925; Dimitri Kirsanoff; a French silent film, with French inter-titles), with Nadia Sibirskaia; and "Rien que les Heures" (1926; Alberto Cavalcanti; a French silent film, with French inter-titles), with Philippe Hériat. . . . ¶ March 5 at 5: "Father of the Bride." . . . ¶ March 6 at noon: "Tol'able David." . . . ¶ March 6 at 2:30: "Meet Me in St. Louis." . . . ¶ March 6 at 5: "L'Evasion" (1923; Georges Champavert; a French silent film, with English inter-titles) and "L'Appel du Sang" (1920; Louis Mercanton; a French silent film, with English inter-titles), with Ivor Novello and Phyllis Neilson-Terry. . . . ¶ March 7 at 2:30: "Ménilmontant" and "Rien que les Heures." . . . ¶ March 7 at 6: "Physics, Control, Behavior" (Tom Sherman). . . . ¶ March 8 at 2:30: "L'Evasion" and "L'Appel du Sang." . . . ¶ March 8 at 6: "Dudley Carter" (1982; Abby Sher). . . . ¶ March 10 at 2:30: "Le Fantôme du Moulin Rouge" (1925; René Clair; a French silent film, with English inter-titles), with Albert Préjean. . . . ¶ March 10 at 6 and March 11 at 2:30: "L'Affiche" (1924; Jean Epstein; a French silent film, with French and Flemish inter-titles), with Nathalie Lissenko. . . . ¶ March 11 at 6: A program of recent Hungarian animated films. . . . ¶ March 12 at noon: "Citizen Kane" (1941; Orson Welles), with Welles, Joseph Cotten, Dorothy Comingore, and Agnes Moorehead. . . . ¶ March 12 at 2:30: "Autour de l'Agent" (1927; Jean Dréville; in French); "La P'tite Lilie" (1927; Alberto Cavalcanti; a French silent film), with Catherine Hessling and Jean Renoir; and "En Rade" (1927; Alberto Cavalcanti; a French silent film, with French inter-titles), with Catherine Hessling. . . . ¶ March 12 at 5: "L'Argent" (1927; Marcel L'Herbier; a French silent film, with French inter-titles), with Pierre Alcover, Brigitte Helm, Alfred Abel, Yvette Guilbert, and Antonin Artaud. (A limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—"He Saw Her Burning" (1982; Joan Jonas), a video installation. Continuous showings noon to 6. Miss Jonas will perform, as part of the installation, on Saturday and Sunday, March 5-6, at 3; Tuesday, March 8, at 6:30; Friday, March 11, at 3 and 6:30; and Saturday and Sunday, March 12-13, at 3. For tickets, call 570-3617. Closed Mondays.

Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. (874-1717)—A film version of the Offenbach opera "Tales of Hoffman" (1951), with Moira Shearer, Robert Rounseville, Leonide Massine, and Robert Helpmann; Sir Thomas Beecham conducted the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. (Sunday, March 6, at 4 and 7. Tickets are available at the theatre between 11 A.M. and 7 P.M. on the day of the performance.)

Bruno Walter Auditorium, New York Public Library at Lincoln Center, 111 Amsterdam Ave., at 65th St.—A program of films directed by Marco Ferreri: March 2 at 6:30 and 9: "Dillinger Is Dead" (1969), with Michel Piccoli and Annie Girardot. . . . ¶ March 3 at 8 and 10: "Bye Bye Monkey" (1978), with Gérard Depardieu and Marcello Mastroianni. . . . ¶ March 4 at 6:30 and 9: "The Ape Woman" (1965), with Annie Girardot and Ugo Tognazzi. . . . ¶ March 5 at 6:30 and 9: "La Grande Bouffe" (1973), with Philippe Noiret and Michel Piccoli. (For information about tickets, call 870-1613.)

IN BRIEF

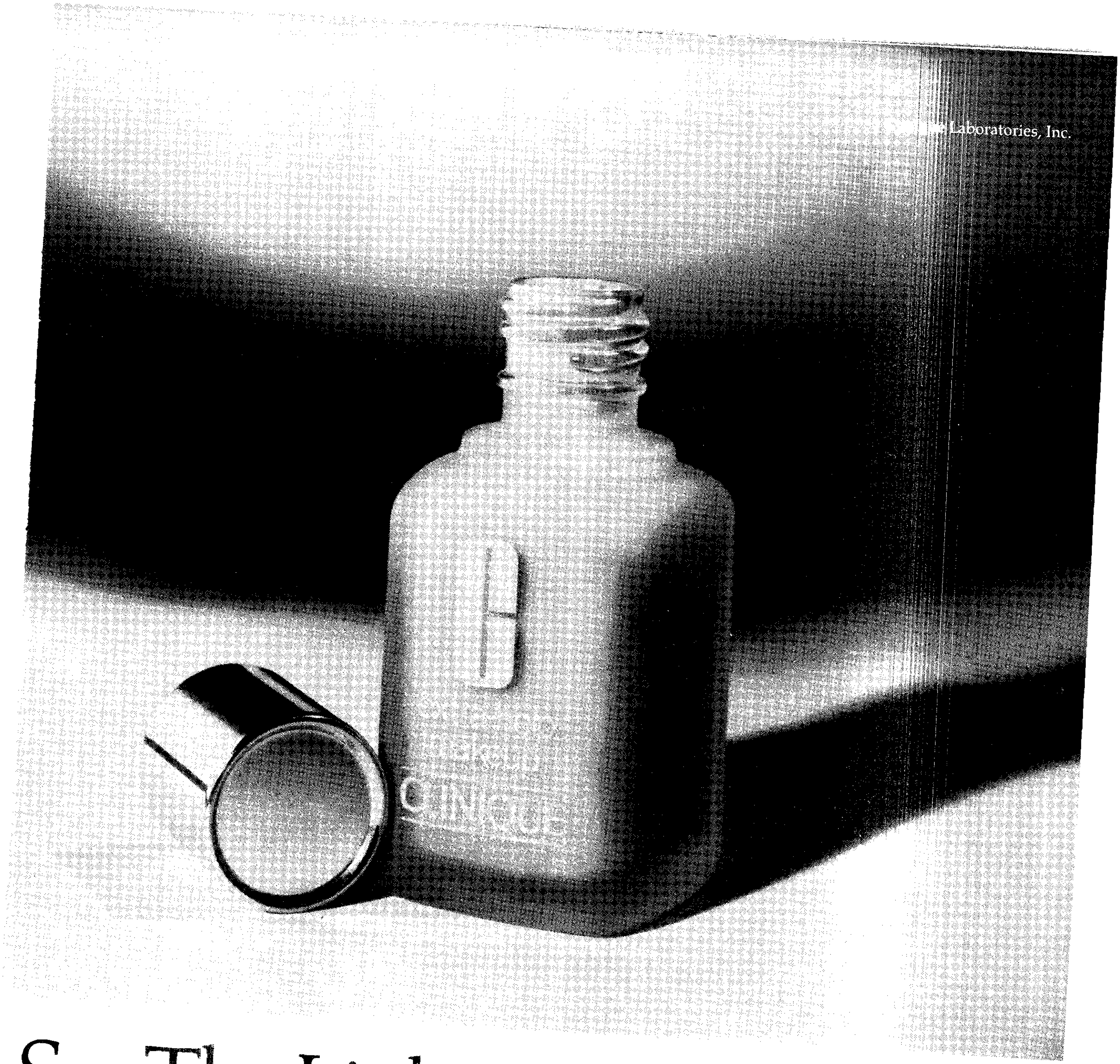
SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

A Bill of Divorcement (1932)—The film is just barely adapted from Clemence Dane's play about a father and daughter doomed by hereditary insanity—the kind of play in which the daughter is named Sydney Fairchild, her father Hilary Fairchild, and the daughter's boyfriend Kit. But as Sydney, Katharine Hepburn, in her film début, was like nothing that had ever been seen on the screen before. It wasn't that she was good, exactly (in fact, her acting was mostly awful), but she was so angular and mannered, with her mouth a scar of suffering, that she was riveting. And John Barrymore, who plays the father, was a fairly riveting performer himself—though his role here is drearily subservient. Young George Cukor directed, in an insulated style all too appropriate to the vehicle. With David Manners (Kit, of course), Billie Burke, Elizabeth Patterson, Paul Cavanaugh, and Henry Stephenson. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 6.)

Billy Budd (1962)—Melville's short novel is stripped for action in this tense, straightforward shipboard narrative, directed by Peter Ustinov. Ustinov's efficiency and Robert Krasker's stylized black-and-white cinematography help to release the ambiguities without clogging the film with metaphysical speculation or too many homoerotic overtones. As Billy, the beautiful sailor, an American Prince Myshkin, Terence Stamp wears white pants and suggests angelic splendor without falling into the narcissistic poses that juveniles often mistake for grace. Robert Ryan is the depraved master-at-arms, Claggart, whose self-hatred makes it necessary for him to destroy Billy, the image of goodness; Ryan gives the role the requisite satanic ugliness. Unfortunately, Ustinov miscasts himself as Captain Vere; as he plays the part, the Captain is a humane man, a good liberal tragically torn by the demands of authority. But what gives Melville's story its fascination and its greatness is the suggestion that Claggart is merely the underling doing the evil Captain's bidding. The film doesn't approach Melville's passion, but it's a good movie anyway. With Paul Rogers, Ronald Lewis, Melvyn Douglas, David McCallum, John Neville, and Niall MacGinnis. The adaptation—by Ustinov, Robert Rossen, and De Witt Bodeen—comes via a play version by Louis O. Coxe and Robert H. Chapman. (Hollywood Twin Cinema 1; March 8-9.)

Das Boot (1982; "The Boat")—If you want to learn about the tedium of life in a German submarine, this is the movie that will give it to you—you're trapped for two and a half hours in a Second World War U-boat that's ten feet wide by a hundred and fifty feet long. And with men who have the same kind of anti-war nobility that the men had in American submarine epics of the fifties. It even has the same kind of heroic man-of-few-words-but-strong-deep-feelings captain (Jurgen Prochnow). The camera keeps moving, yet the whole feeling is claustrophobic—the movement of the camera (deliberately) calls *more* attention to how cramped everything is. The director, Wolfgang Petersen, did the adaptation of the best-selling autobiographical novel by Lothar-Günther Buchheim, a former war correspondent. The movie "Das Boot" is in German; the dubbed-into-English version is called "The Boat." (In German, with subtitles, at the Embassy 72nd St., through March 5, and at the 68th St. Playhouse, through March 10. . . . ¶ In dubbed English at the Embassy, through March 3.)

Cobra Woman (1944)—Camp classic, with Maria Montez as voluptuous twins. She's the good Nadja, a South Seas girl who is kidnapped just as she's about to marry Jon Hall (who smiles his moony, Mona Lisa smile and looks as boneheaded as ever), and she's the evil High Priestess Tollea, who rules a tribe of snake worshippers on Cobra Island. The impeccably lifeless cast includes Sabu, Edgar Barrier, Lon Chaney, Jr., Lois Collier, Mary Nash, Samuel S. Hinds, and Moroni Olsen. Among the exotic treats are a rumbling volcano, a pet chimp, ominous gong sounds, forest-glade love scenes, human sacrifices, Tollea's handmaidens in their high-heeled pumps, her imperious writhing during what is supposed to be a demonic dance, and the good Nadja's plea for the symbol of the power that is rightfully hers: "Gif me the cobra jool!" Produced by George Waggner for Universal, and directed by that playful wit Robert Siod-



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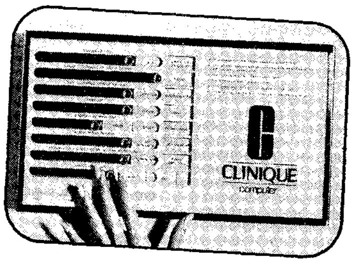

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mak (on sets that are often parodistic), from a script by Gene Lewis and Richard Brooks, based on a story by W. Scott Darling. (Thalia; March 8.)

Coup de Torchon (Clean Slate)—Bertrand Tavernier's film is set in some sort of French colonial Dogpatch in Africa, in 1938, and it stars Philippe Noiret as a cuckolded weakling who is jeered at by the brutal white men who exploit the natives. He is also the only officer of the law in the area, and he secretly kills off the exploiters, using his reputation for being cowardly and ineffectual as a cover. The movie is torpid even in the early sequences that aim at sly farce, and its thesis is that even such drastic and half-mad cleanup jobs are hopeless. Tavernier may think he's bringing out the rage behind despair, but all he brings out is his sense of futility. The film chokes on its own unresolvable ambiguities. With Isabelle Huppert, who frisks about nakedly and amusingly, and Jean-Pierre Marielle, Stéphane Audran, Guy Marchand, Eddy Mitchell, Samba Mane, Abdoulaye Diop, and Irene Skobline. The script, by Jean Aurenche and Tavernier, is based on the American pulp novel "Pop. 1280," by Jim Thompson, which was set in the American South. In French. (Reviewed in our issue of 1/24/83.) (D. W. Griffith. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema; starting March 4, tentative.)

Diva—An up-to-the-minute romantic thriller from France, made by a new director, Jean-Jacques Beineix, who has a fabulous camera technique and understands the pleasures to be had from a picture that doesn't take itself too seriously. The diva is an awesomely beautiful black American soprano (Wilhelmenia Fernandez) who refuses to make recordings. Frédéric Andrei is the wide-eyed eighteen-year-old postal messenger who adores her; he sneaks his Nagra tape machine into her concert in Paris so he'll be able to listen to her at home—and all hell breaks loose around him. The unfazable heroine (the fourteen-year-old Thuy An Luu) is a post-Godardian tootsie—in her short-short skirts and transparent plastic coat she's a lollipop wrapped in cellophane. It's a mixture of style and chic hanky-panky, but it's genuinely sparkling. In French. (4/19/82) (Plaza; through March 3. . . . ¶ Cinema Studio; starting March 4.)

E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial—Steven Spielberg's movie is bathed in warmth and it seems to clear all the bad thoughts out of your head. It's the story of a ten-year-old boy, Elliott, who feels fatherless and lost because his parents have separated, and who finds a miraculous friend—an alien inadvertently left on Earth by a visiting spaceship. This fusion of science fiction and mythology is emotionally rounded and complete; it reminds you of the goofiest dreams you had as a kid, and rehabilitates them. It puts a spell on the audience; it's genuinely entrancing. The stars are Henry Thomas, as Elliott, and E.T., who was designed by Carlo Rambaldi. With Drew Barrymore, Robert Macnaughton, Dee Wallace, and Peter Coyote. The script is by Melissa Mathison. (6/14/82) (Loews New York Twin, and Movieland. . . . ¶ Bay Cinema; through March 3.)

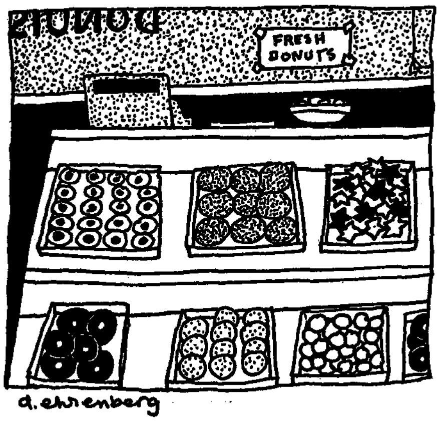
Fanny (1932)—Though the three films of the Marcel Pagnol trilogy are interrelated, each is complete in itself. This second one was directed by Marc Allégret (and Pierre Prévert) with the same cast as the first, "Marius" (see below). After Marius (Pierre Fresnay) goes to sea, his pregnant fiancée, Fanny (Orane Démazis), marries the sailmaker (Charpin); Marius's father, César (the great Raimu), acts as godfather to his grandson. César's dominating, expansive character is the central force of the film. When Marius returns, he finds that his leaving was an irremediable mistake—that the sailmaker is acknowledged as the father of his son and that there is no place for him (until the concluding film, "César"). You need a lot of tolerance for warm comic invention; it drags fearfully. In French. (Metro Cinema; March 11.)

The Farmer's Daughter (1947)—This political comedy was enormously popular—maybe because of its smooth, bland, apolitical cheerfulness, which some people considered fresh. It's amiable but unrelentingly clean and nice. Loretta Young plays a Swedish housemaid who finds a job in the home of a patrician, politically influential family (dominated by Ethel Barrymore), and gets to be a congresswoman. With Joseph Cotten, Charles Bickford, Rose Hobart, Rhys Williams, Harry Davenport, Lex Barker, Don Beddoe, and Jason Robards (père). Directed by H. C. Potter, from a screenplay by Allen Rivkin and his partnerwife, Laura Kerr. (Hollywood Twin Cinema 2; March 9-10.)

48 Hrs.—Walter Hill's fast and brutal action comedy is a roller coaster that hurtles along. Nick Nolte is a San Francisco police detective and Eddie Murphy (making his movie début) is a young hipster thief who outsmarts him by his hustler's verbal finesse and his black man's sense of irony. The two set out as brawling and cursing enemies and, of course, become guffawing pals; the racial infighting is what gives the film its charge. With Annette O'Toole, Frank McRae, James Remar, Sonny Landham, Brion James, Olivia Brown, David Patrick Kelly, and the Busboys. (1/10/83) (34th St. East, Baronet, Embassy 1, and Embassy.)

Gandhi—A biographical epic, directed by Richard Attenborough, whose sensibility is conventional. Spanning fifty-five years, the picture covers some of the principal events in Gandhi's public life and tidies up his rather kinky domestic relations. Gandhi goes by in a cloud of serenity, and everyone who sees him knuckles under (with the exception of a few misguided fellows, of course). Ben Kingsley, who plays the Mahatma, looks the part, has a fine, quiet presence, and conveys Gandhi's shrewdness. Kingsley is impressive; the picture isn't. The first half builds up considerable interest in Gandhi; the second half is scattered—as if it had been added to or subtracted from at random. From a script by John Briley. (3 hours, 8 minutes.) (12/27/82) (Ziegfeld.)

Hamlet (1948)—Laurence Olivier produced and directed this fluid, handsome, satisfyingly paced version, and he himself is a witty and active platinum-blond Hamlet. It is a tribute to Shakespeare's passionate immediacy that everyone has his own idea of the play, and many will find much to quarrel with in this film. (For example, the soliloquies have been turned into interior monologues, which diminishes them.) But even if you feel that certain scenes should be done differently, when has the rest of the play been done so well? Whatever the omissions, the mutilations, the mistakes, this is very likely the most exciting and most alive production of "Hamlet" we will ever see on the screen. It's never dull, and if characters such as Fortinbras and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern have been sacrificed, it's remarkable how little they are missed. With Jean Simmons as Ophelia, Basil Sydney as the King, Eileen Herlie as the Queen, Stanley Holloway as the Grave Digger, Felix Aylmer as Polonius, Norman Wooland as Horatio, Terence Morgan as Laertes, Esmond Knight as Bernardo, Anthony Quayle as Marcellus, Harcourt Williams as First Player, and John Laurie as Francisco. The adaptation is by Alan Dent, and the music is by William Walton. (Thalia; March 7.)



Hester Street (1975)—A modest comedy about the assimilation process among a group of Russian-Jewish immigrants living on the lower East Side in 1896. Independently made, this first feature by the writer-director Joan Micklin Silver begins lamely, but it wins one over. Carol Kane is lovely as the timid, pious, rejected wife of a sweatshop worker who has broken away from the Old World traditions she represents. Mel Howard plays Bernstein, the scholarly boarder who loves her. With Steven Keats as the husband and Dorrie Kavanaugh. (St. Marks Cinema; March 4-10.)

The Honeymoon Killers (1970)—Based on the lives of the multiple murderers Martha Beck and Raymond Fernandez, who met their victims through Lonely Hearts clubs, and who were put to death at Sing Sing in 1951. This low-budget black-and-white movie is so literal-minded that it resembles a *True Detective* account of the case. The writer-director, Leonard Kastle, whose first picture this was, keeps the images so brightly lighted and so exactly planned and worked out that every ugly detail is in place—the hammer blow on the head, the trickle of blood, the ludicrous tongues sticking out of dead faces. As the two-hundred-pound Martha Beck, Shirley Stoler is much too shrill at the start but quiets down and improves as the movie plods on; as the sleazy charmer Ray Fernandez, Tony Lo Bianco is alarmingly authentic to the pulpy genre. The women victims include Marilyn Chris, Barbara Cason, and Mary Jane Higby. The film uses music by Gustav Mahler. (Little Theatre, Public Theatre; starting March 8.)

Jamaica Inn (1939)—A forgettable, generally forgotten Hitchcock gothic, from a Daphne du Maurier novel, full of Cornwall shipwrecks and smuggling and murder in the time of good King George IV. The picture is dominated by Charles Laughton (with a false beak) as an evil, bound-to-go-mad rake. With Maureen O'Hara, who is a very dim heroine here, Emlyn Williams enjoying himself playing a sinister scamp, and Leslie Banks, Robert Newton, and Marie Ney. Written by Sidney Gilliat, Joan Harrison, and J. B. Priestley. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 12.)

The Jolson Story (1946)—Larry Parks plays Al Jolson as a living embodiment of all the virtues enumerated in the Boy Scout oath. While Parks kneels and wiggles and rolls his eyes, the actual Jolson sings in his familiar gravelly baritone. Despite the pious falsehoods it had enough energy to be a big hit. Directed by Alfred E. Green; with Evelyn Keyes, William Demarest, and Bill Goodwin. (Hollywood Twin Cinema 2; March 7-8.)

Jour de Fête (1950)—As a director, Jacques Tati has a spare, quick, improvisatory touch. As a comedian, buoyancy and impersonal eccentricity in the face of disaster are his special style. In this film, shot in the village of Sainte-Sévère-sur-Indre, with villagers playing many of the parts, the tall, ungainly Tati is the postman who attends the village fair and sees a documentary on the advanced, mechanized American postal system. He is overcome with enthusiasm for speed, and though he has no helicopter, he has his bicycle. He takes off, and what happens is unpredictable, even if you've already seen the movie—it's all so odd you forget it. Still, the film's melancholy humor is probably a little too mild or quaint for most American tastes. Written by Tati and Henri Marquet. It's not silent (it has sound effects and music), but it's not in French, either. Tati has devised a kind of unintelligible yet expressive gibberish. It's like the talk of robots who've got fouled up. (57th St. Playhouse; through March 3.)

The King of Comedy—With Robert De Niro and Jerry Lewis, directed by Martin Scorsese. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Coronet.)

A Lady's Morals (1930)—Originally called "The Soul Kiss;" neither title indicates what a big, heavy-spirited M-G-M musical tearjerker this is. Grace Moore plays Jenny Lind, who loses her voice while singing in "Norma," and Reginald Denny is a young composer who

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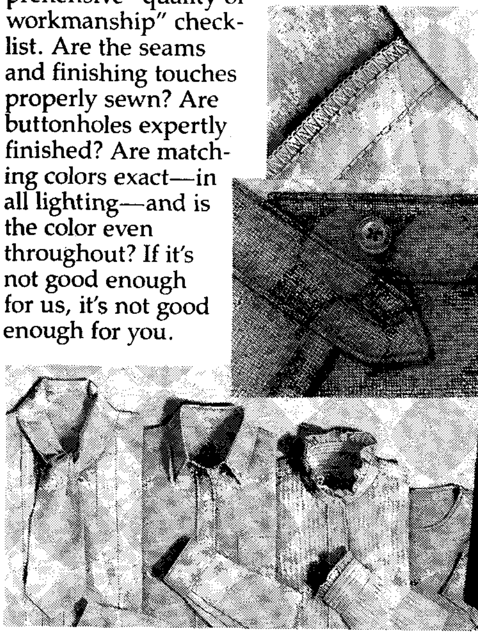

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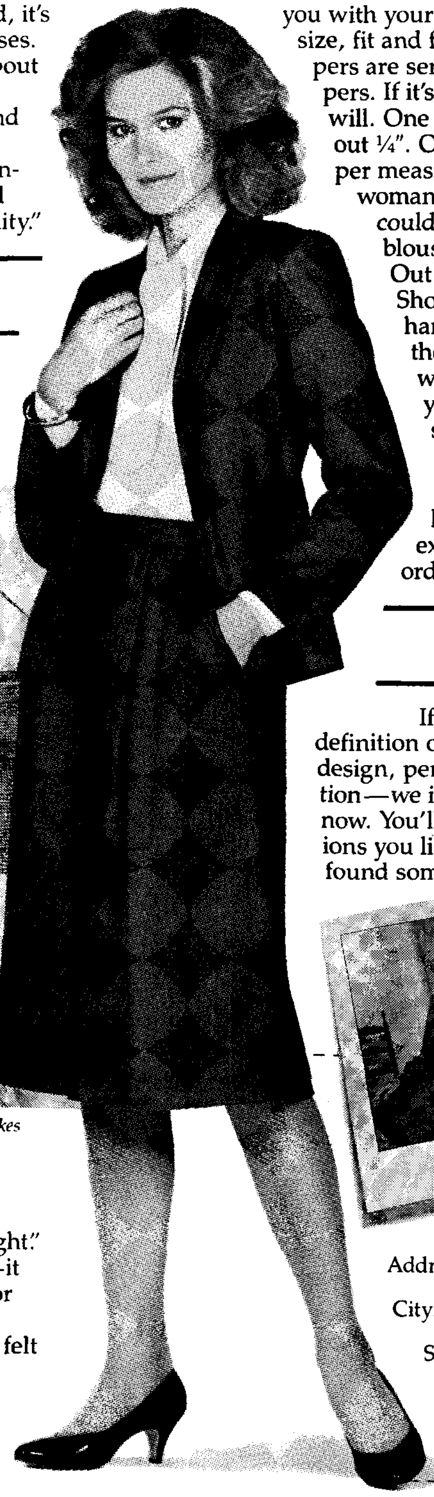

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loves her but goes blind. Wallace Beery turns up as P. T. Barnum. Sidney Franklin directed, and Adrian draped Miss Moore, who moved a little less than gracefully. With Jobyna Howland, George F. Marion, Paul Porcasi, Gilbert Emery, and Bodil Rosing. (Regency; March 6-7.)

Love and Anarchy (1973)—Lina Wertmüller's large, epic film is set mostly in a thirties brothel; there, a young country bumpkin (Giancarlo Giannini, looking like a freckled young chicken), who intends to assassinate Mussolini, falls in love and botches his plans. The movie is uneven; it often seems like a silent film, and sometimes it is extravagant and operatic. But when Wertmüller concentrates on the whores' faces and attitudes it can be very beautiful. With Mariangela Melato, Lina Polito, Elena Fiore, and Eros Pagni. Cinematography by Giuseppe Rotunno; music by Nino Rota. In Italian. (Thalia; March 6.)

Lovesick—With Dudley Moore, Elizabeth McGovern, John Huston, and Alec Guinness; directed by Marshall Brickman. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Murray Hill, and R.K.O. Century National Twin. . . . ¶ Gemini, and Loews 83rd Quad; through March 10.)

Marius (1931)—The first film of the celebrated Marcel Pagnol trilogy. Static and visually unimaginative (Alexander Korda directed) but famous for its dialogue and characterization, and for the rich humanity that Raimu brought to the role of César, the Marseilles café owner. In the film, the life along the harbor centers on this café. The story involves César's son, Marius (the elegant Pierre Fresnay, oddly miscast), who longs to go to sea, though he loves Fanny (Orane Démazis). Produced and written by Pagnol. In French. (Metro Cinema; March 11.)

Mean Streets (1973)—A true original, and a triumph of personal filmmaking. This picture about the experience of growing up in New York's Little Italy has an unsettling, episodic rhythm, and it's dizzyingly sensual. The director, Martin Scorsese, shows us a thicker-textured rot than we have ever had in an American movie, and a riper sense of evil. With Harvey Keitel as Charlie, Robert De Niro as Johnny Boy, and Richard Romanus, David Proval, Harry Northup, George Memmoli, Amy Robinson, Cesare Danova, and, in bits, David Carradine, Robert Carradine, and the director—he's the gunman in the car. Script by Scorsese and Mardik Martin; cinematography by Kent Wakeford. (Most of the film was actually shot in Los Angeles.) (Hollywood Twin Cinema 1; March 10-12.)

Missing (1982)—Making his first American movie, Costa-Gavras uses the same approach that American directors have often used when they wanted to teach us something: he has given his accusatory political thriller a soft, warm-and-human center. As the businessman Ed Horman, the father of a young American who had disappeared in Chile during the days after the military coup that overthrew Allende, Jack Lemmon is the naïve, protected, nonpolitical conservative who is radicalized (or, at least, reëducated) by what he learns. And Lemmon is so eager to have depth that he looks on a serious role as a chance for redemption; Ed arrives in Santiago to look for his son and we're stuck, observing each step in the calibrated process of his coming closer to the counterculture values of his son's wife (Sissy Spacek, who's fresh and natural). Costa-Gavras' antipathy to Americans appears to be so deep-seated that he can't create American characters. The only real filmmaking is in the backgrounds: in the anxious, ominous atmosphere of a city under martial law—the sirens, the tanks, the helicopters, the feeling of abnormal silences and of random terror. With John Shea as Charles, the son (seen in flashbacks), and Melanie Mayron. Based on the book by Thomas Hauser; shot in Mexico. (3/8/82) (U. A. 85th St. East; March 4-10. . . . ¶ Olympia Quad; starting March 4.)

Mr. Hulot's Holiday (1953)—People are at their most desperate when they are working at enjoying themselves; it is Jacques Tati's peculiar comic triumph to have caught the ghastliness of a summer vacation at the beach. Fortunately, his technique is light and dry slapstick; the chronicle of human foibles and frustrations never sinks to the moist or the lovable. As director, co-author, and star, Tati is sparse, eccentric, quick. It is not until afterward—with the sweet, nostalgic music lingering—that these misadventures may take on a certain depth and poignancy. In French. (57th St. Playhouse; starting March 11.)

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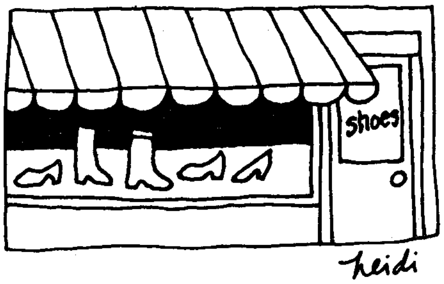
Moby Dick (1956)—It's an impressive attempt to be faithful to Melville, and the battles with the elements (and the whale) were so difficult to stage that the footage was shot over a two-year period, while the cost of the production rose to almost five million dollars. Yet for all his dedication to this ambitious project, the director, John Huston, must not have been able to keep up his energy level; at times, his work seems surprisingly perfunctory. The film begins imaginatively, with Richard Basehart as Ishmael going down to the shore, and has all kinds of stirring things in it—Orson Welles' reading of Father Mapple's wonderful sermon about Jonah; finely textured cinematography by Oswald Morris, which has the look of steel engravings and calls up suggestions of Coleridge; exciting sequences; some great rhetoric; and a general display of Huston's pyrotechnics. But Gregory Peck—the least demonic of leading men—is a disastrous Ahab; bearded, he looks like a stock-company Lincoln. And the movie doesn't add up to anything approaching the novel; it lacks the unity, the rhythm, the poetry, the mind at work. There are still more than enough reasons to see it. Ray Bradbury and Huston wrote the screenplay. With Leo Genn as Starbuck, Friedrich Ledebur as Queequeg, Royal Dano as Elijah, and Bernard Miles, James Robertson Justice, Harry Andrews, and Mervyn Johns. Shot off the coasts of Wales and the Canary Islands, and on location in Ireland, as well as in a London studio. (This was the third version; both earlier ones—1926 and 1930—starred John Barrymore.) (Hollywood Twin Cinema 1; March 8-9.)

The More the Merrier (1943)—It has a memorable, summer-night love scene: the very proper government-worker heroine (Jean Arthur) reluctantly sits down on the front steps of her apartment building with the inventor-hero (Joel McCrea); they begin to neck, and she's embarrassed by what she feels. It's lovely; sexy and funny. The film is set in Washington, D.C., during the Second World War; the housing shortage results in their becoming part of an innocent *ménage à trois* with Charles Coburn, an elderly businessman who enjoys playing Cupid. Directed by George Stevens, this hit comedy is lively and well paced, but the fun is too often forced, and Jean Arthur overdoes her adorably prim act. McCrea, though, is easy and casually sophisticated, and, as usual, serves his co-stars, gets his laughs, and never hogs attention. Written by many hands (Robert Russell, Frank Ross, Richard Flournoy, Lewis R. Foster); with Bruce Bennett and Richard Gaines. (Remade in 1966 as "Walk, Don't Run," with Cary Grant in the Coburn role.) (Metro Cinema; March 8.)

My Favorite Year—The year is 1954, when Sid Caesar was the king of live TV comedy, and this movie is a fictional treatment of life backstage during the days when many soon-to-be-famous writers worked on his shows, brain-storming together. As the brawny, truculent King Kaiser, Joe Bologna suggests an introverted ox, and Peter O'Toole is King's guest star from Hollywood—the notorious womanizing boozer Alan Swann, who is part John Barrymore and part Errol Flynn. Bologna has an authentic boss-comic aura, and O'Toole plays Swann with a funky daring that is simply astounding. This show-business farce is the first film directed by Richard Benjamin, and it's a creaky job of moviemaking, but it has a bubbling spirit. Bill Macy, Lainie Kazan, Cameron Mitchell, and Anne De Salvo all have a crack at fresh material. Also with Mark Linn-Baker, Jessica Harper, Selma Diamond, Adolph Green, Lou Jacobi, Tony Di Benedetto, Gloria Stuart, and Basil Hoffman. From a terrific script by Norman Steinberg (who appears in a bit as Sandy) and Dennis Palumbo. (10/4/82) (Gramercy, Olympia Quad, and Embassy; starting March 4.)



The Night of the Shooting Stars—In its feeling and completeness, this film by Paolo and Vittorio Taviani may rank close to Jean Renoir's bafflingly beautiful "Grand Illusion." The story is a woman's memories of her adventures as a six-year-old in a Tuscan village and its environs during the summer of 1944, when the American troops were rumored only days away, and the Germans who had held the area under occupation were preparing to clear out—preparations that included mining the houses so they could blow them up. Yet this setting is magical, like a Shakespearean forest, and the woman's account has the quality of folklore and legend, and even its most tragic moments can be dizzyingly comic. With Omero Antonutti as the leader of the group of two or three dozen villagers who sneak away in the night to find the Americans. The script is by the Tavianis and the producer, Giuliani G. De Negri, with the collaboration of Tonino Guerra; the score is by Nicola Piovani; cinematography is by Franco di Giacomo. In Italian. (2/7/83) (Lincoln Plaza.)

The Nutty Professor (1963)—Jerry Lewis in a Jekyll-and-Hyde story that provides him with one of the best gimmicks of his career: as Julius Kelp, he's a shy, clumsy chemistry professor, a simp with specs and rabbity teeth, but when he drinks his formula he turns into a brash, domineering hipster singer named Buddy Love—i.e., a cartoon of Dean Martin. Working within this format, he has some scenes that can hold their own with the classic silent comedies. The picture is very erratic, and it's too long and repetitive; Lewis, who also directed and wrote the script (with Bill Richmond), has always had trouble knowing when to drop something. But he had the good taste to cast Stella Stevens as the heroine; with her just faintly infantile sexiness, she's a remarkably curvy and pert straight woman. With Kathleen Freeman, Howard Morris, Henry Gibson, and Les Brown and his band. (Agee Room; March 11-12.)

An Officer and a Gentleman—This formula romantic melodrama seems to come out of a time warp, but the director, Taylor Hackford, has done a smashing job of making the retrograde love story whiz by. Richard Gere is the tightly wound-up loner who is determined to become a flier; the movie centers on his thirteen-week basic-training ordeal at Naval Aviation Officer Candidate School. Gere has a striking moment when the character cracks, after the tough drill sergeant (Louis Gossett, Jr.) has caught him in some petty chiselling and punished him. But after he has broken down he's still Richard Gere, lost in his own placid beauty. As the mill-worker heroine, Debra Winger brings the film sultriness; you pull for this heroine because her tough-chick little-girl insolence plays off the avid look in her eyes that tells you she longs to make human contact. Gossett plays the sergeant bone hard; it's a beautifully hammy austere performance. There are also impressive characterizations by David Keith and Robert Loggia. With Tony Plana as an officer candidate with a Mohawk haircut and Lisa Eilbacher as a woman candidate. The script is by Douglas Day Stewart. (8/23/82) (72nd Street East, and Embassy.)

The Old Maid (1939)—Bette Davis doesn't have much talent for masochism. When she at

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tempts the sacrificial-mother roles that were meat and potatoes to many a trouper, she builds the character so painstakingly that she loses her flare and turns mealy. In this costume picture, taken from Zoë Akins' Pulitzer Prize play version of the Edith Wharton novel, she's an unwed mother who is forced to turn over her infant daughter to—of all people—Miriam Hopkins, as her married cousin; then she must stand by and watch as her daughter grows up, treating her contemptuously as a spinster aunt. Full of tight-lipped renunciation, Davis gives what might be called a creditable performance; the picture isn't bad, but it trudges along and never becomes exciting. Edmund Goulding directed smoothly, from Casey Robinson's screenplay. With Jane Bryan as the daughter, and George Brent, James Stephenson, Louise Fazenda, Jerome Cowan, William Lundigan, and Donald Crisp. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 8.)

Parsifal—Hans-Jürgen Syberberg's film is a rich and beautiful production—thoughtful, inventive, and very ambitious. The musical performance is of high distinction. The visual imagery is arresting, resonant, and colorful; it embraces and presents those abundant, varied elements from which Wagner's most profound opera was distilled—his life, his reading, his thinking, his passions, his response to art and nature, his earlier compositions. With two young Swiss, Michael Kutter and Karin Krick, in the dual role of Parsifal (the singing is by the Dresden tenor Reiner Goldberg); Edith Clever as Kundry (sung by Yvonne Minton); Robert Lloyd singing and enacting Gurnemanz; and Aage Hauglund as Klingsor. The Swiss conductor Armin Jordan, an outstanding Wagnerian, also plays Amfortas (the role is sung by Wolfgang Schone). The Monte Carlo Philharmonic plays with great breadth and beauty of tone and subtlety of solo inflection, and the Prague Philharmonic Choir's singing is firm and full. In German. (2/21/83; under Musical Events.) (Guild.)

Playtime (1968)—Jacques Tati's most innovative work. M. Hulot is still here—high-belted trousers, short raincoat, loping walk, as if he were braced to smash a tennis volley—but his importance has receded, because Tati's view is that the hero of modern urban life is everybody. He sees something comic in every character in the picture, without ridicule. (57th St. Playhouse; March 4-10.)

The Road Warrior—Set in a post-apocalyptic Wasteland, this Australian film is a mutant, sprung from virtually all action genres. It's one continuous spurt of energy, and the jangly, fast editing suggests wit; so does the broad blacktop highway that cuts across the desert nothingness. And the rampaging vandals—punkish post-nuclear-war bikers, led by a masked bodybuilder called the Humungus—are s-m comic-strip terrors. But the picture is abstract in an adolescent way. Director George Miller's attempt to tap into the universal concept of the hero (as enunciated by Jung and explicated by Joseph Campbell in "The Hero with a Thousand Faces") makes the film joyless. He consciously uses his hero, Max (Mel Gibson), as an icon; that's enough to squeeze the juice out of any actor, and Max seems bland and apathetic. For all its huffing and puffing, this is a sappy, sentimental movie. With Bruce Spence and Vernon Wells; the script is by Terry Hayes and Miller, with Brian Hannant. (9/6/82) (Eastside Cinema, and Rivoli; through March 10.)

Secret Agent (1936)—Not altogether successful Hitchcock version of Somerset Maugham's spy thriller "Ashenden," but it has a bright, quick, fresh touch, and it's fascinating partly because the two male leads, John Gielgud and Peter Lorre, are so ill-used. Gielgud looks like a tailor's dummy for Leslie Howard, and Lorre plays a cheerful little killer who speaks with a Mexican accent and wears a single earring. With Madeleine Carroll, Robert Young, and Lilli Palmer. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 10.)

Shoot the Moon (1982)—As Faith and George Dunlap, whose marriage has become poisoned because she knows all his weaknesses and failures and her knowledge eats away at his confidence, Diane Keaton and Albert Finney give the kind of performances that in the theatre become legendary. And, in its smaller dimensions, Dana Hill's performance as their thirteen-year-old daughter is perhaps equally fine. This unapologetically grown-up movie about separating is perhaps the most revealing American movie of its era. Though the director, Alan Parker, doesn't do anything innovative in technique, it's a modern movie in terms of its consciousness. The characters in the script written by Bo Goldman aren't taken from the movies, or from books, either. Their emotions are raw, and rawness is what makes this film get to you. It goes way past coolness. Diane Keaton has no vanity: Faith's angry misery is almost like a debauch—it makes her appear sodden. And both as a character and as an actor, Finney seems startled and appalled by what has been let loose in him. He's an actor possessed by a great role—pulled into it kicking and screaming, by his own guts. With Peter Weller, Karen Allen, George Murdock, and three child actresses—Viveka Davis, Tracey Gold, and Tina Yothers. Filmed on locations in Northern California; cinematography by Michael Seresin; production design by Geoffrey Kirkland; editing by Gerry Hambling. (1/18/82) (St. Marks Cinema; through March 3.)

Sophie's Choice—This unusually faithful adaptation of William Styron's Holocaust Gothic comes to us stuffed with literary references and encrusted with the weighty culture of big themes; evil, tortured souls, guilt. The director, Alan J. Pakula, did the screenplay himself. He didn't write it, he penned it. Meryl Streep is Sophie the Catholic; Kevin Kline is Nathan the mad-genius Jew, who is her lover and tormentor; and Peter MacNicol is Stingo the Protestant, the young heir to Southern chivalry (and stand-in for Styron)—he moves into the Brooklyn house they live in and becomes involved in their sadomasochistic trials. Meryl Streep is colorful in the first, late-forties scenes, but when the flashbacks to Sophie's past start up and the delayed revelations are sprung on us, it's apparent that the whole plot is based on a connection that isn't there—the connection between Sophie and Nathan's relationship and what the Nazis did to the Jews. (12/27/82) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Manhattan, 86th St. East, Greenwich Playhouse, Cinema 3, and Criterion Theatres. . . . ¶ Loews 83rd Quad; through March 10.)

Sweet Charity (1969)—Based on what is possibly Fellini's finest film, "Nights of Cabiria," about a gullible, softhearted prostitute, this big musical, starring Shirley MacLaine, may have been too ambitious a project for Bob Fosse's dêbut as a movie director. The tricky camera effects that Fosse later brought off in "Cabaret" and in the TV special "Liza with a Z" are jangling here, and although Shirley MacLaine tries hard, it's obvious that her dancing isn't up to the demands of the role. It's a disaster, but zoom-happy Fosse's choreographic conceptions are intensely dramatic, and the movie has some of the best dancing in American musicals of the period. With Sammy Davis, Jr., Paula Kelly, Chita Rivera, Ricardo Montalban, Barbara Bouchet, Stubby Kaye, and John McMartin. Peter Stone did the screenplay, based on the version Neil Simon did for Broadway; with songs by Cy Coleman and Dorothy Fields. (Hollywood Twin Cinema 2; March 6.)

Tootsie—Marvellous fun. Dustin Hoffman plays Michael Dorsey, a brilliant, "uncompromising" New York actor whom no one wants to hire because he makes things hell for everybody. When Michael's girlfriend (Teri Garr) goes up for an audition for a role in a soap and is rejected, he makes himself up as a woman, presents himself as Dorothy Michaels, and lands the job. And Michael finds himself when he's Dorothy—he's such a dedicated, fanatical actor that he comes fully alive only when he's playing a role. Michael is still in the guise of Dorothy when he meets his dream girl—Jessica Lange, who's like a shock absorber to him. With Bill Murray, Charles Durning, George Gaynes, Doris Belack, Dabney Coleman, and, as Michael's agent, Sydney Pollack, who also directed. Pollack does some of his best work yet in the opening sequences—a crackling, rapid-fire presentation of the hopes versus the realities of out-of-work actors' lives. The script is credited to Larry Gelbart and Murray Schisgal, but Don McGuire wrote the first draft, and Elaine May and many others worked on it. (12/27/82) (R.K.O. Century Art, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York

Twin, and Loews Paramount. . . . ¶ Loews 83rd Quad; through March 10.)

THE VERDICT—When Sidney Lumet gets serious, his energetic, fast-moving style falls apart. The camera sits like Death on the dark, angled images of this anguished movie about a Boston Irish lawyer, played by Paul Newman, who was hurt by those closest to him and became a booze-soaked failure. When the lawyer goes into court to fight the powerful Archdiocese of Boston, his faith in the judgment of the ordinary people who sit on the jury enables him to redeem himself. It's a Frank Capra setup given art-film treatment. Newman plays his role for all it has got, but it's a tired old show-business view of "a good man." In its own sombre, inflated terms, the picture is effective, but it's dragged out so self-importantly that you have time to recognize what a hopelessly naïve, incompetent, and untrustworthy lawyer the hero is. With Charlotte Rampling, James Mason, Jack Warden, Lindsay Crouse, Milo O'Shea, Edward Binns, Julie Bovasso, Lewis Stadlen, and Wesley Addy. The script, by David Mamet, is based on a novel by Barry Reed. (1/10/83) (Gotham Cinema, New Yorker, and Criterion Theatres. . . . ¶ Gemini; starting March 4.)

VICTOR/VICTORIA (1982)—The writer-director Blake Edwards' rough-and-tumble boudoir farce centers on Julie Andrews as Victoria, an English singer stranded in Paris in 1934, who pretends to be a man so that she can get work as a female impersonator. This is an audience pleaser in the worst sense. As an aging homosexual entertainer who trains Victoria to pass as Victor, Robert Preston brings an unholy glee to his work. He plays a sentimental stereotype so heartily and likably that he redeems the musty material. James Garner, with a mustache and acting like a funny, scowly Clark Gable, is a nightclub owner from Chicago, and, as the girlfriend he discards when he falls for Victoria, Leslie Ann Warren, gone blond, does dippy, exaggerated versions of Jean Harlow's nasal petulance. This picture features speeches about sexual politics that are the latest in show-biz enlightenment; it also features a chorus line, headed by Lesley Ann Warren, that may be the most contemptuous display of women's bodies ever seen in a major-studio movie. With Alex Karras as Garner's bodyguard. The songs by Henry Mancini and Leslie Bricusse are bland and forgettable. Based on the 1933 German film comedy "Viktor und Viktoria," this is at least the fifth version. (5/3/82) (Gramercy, Olympia Quad, and Embassy; starting March 4.)

WINTER KILLS (1979)—A rampageous thriller written and directed by William Richert, from a novel by Richard Condon. John Huston is superb as a villainous old self-made millionaire, and Jeff Bridges is his all too dutiful son. Also on hand are Eli Wallach, Tony Perkins, Toshiro Mifune, Ralph Meeker, and Belinda Bauer. (Cinema Studio; through March 3.)

THE YEAR OF LIVING DANGEROUSLY—Peter Weir's romantic adventure film is set in Indonesia in 1965, during the political upheavals that shook President Sukarno's unstable government, and centers on the Caucasian community of journalists and diplomats in Djakarta. Linda Hunt has the pivotal male role of the goblinlike Billy Kwan, a half-Chinese, half-Australian cameraman who plays matchmaker and brings together Mel Gibson, as a newly arrived Australian foreign correspondent, and Sigourney Weaver, as the assistant military attaché at the British Embassy. To a degree, Weir is the victim of his own skill at creating the illusion of authentic Third World misery, rioting, and chaos; the emaciation of the natives overwhelms the made-up problems of the Caucasians. But movie squalor has its own glamour, and scene by scene this film is fascinating; despite a certain amount of mystical-East blather, it's alive on the screen. A new-style old-time "dangerous" steaminess builds up as Gibson and Weaver eye each other. And though Billy Kwan is the movie's walking conscience and higher moral purpose, Linda Hunt's lyric intensity and concentration help to purify the lines she speaks. Filmed in the Philippines and Australia. With Bill Kerr, Michael Murphy, Bembol Roco, and Noel Ferrier. Based on C. J. Koch's highly readable 1978 novel. (2/21/83) (Manhattan, R.K.O. Century 86th St. Twin, Quad Cinema, and R.K.O. Century Cinerama Twin. . . . ¶ Loews 83rd Quad; through March 10.)

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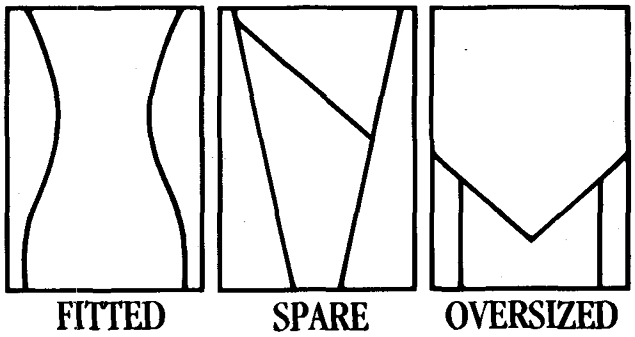

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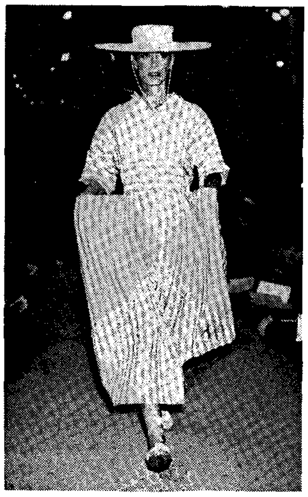

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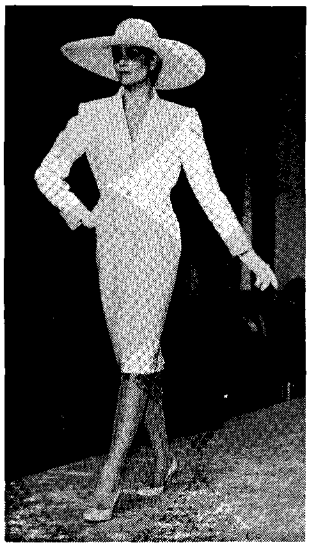

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

WE have just heard from an old friend:

Fifty years ago, on March 4, 1933, Franklin Delano Roosevelt was inaugurated President of the United States for the first time, and I was there, in the crowd. (This was the last of the March 4th Inaugurations; ever since, they have taken place on January 20th.) I was eighteen, and I drove from college in Baltimore to Washington in a battered Ford owned by a classmate; the mere fact that he owned a four-wheeled vehicle gave him the appearance of being exceedingly rich. The times were desperate. Thirteen million Americans were out of work (including my own father); thousands of families were living in makeshift shacks in our greatest cities; farmers were rioting to prevent foreclosure of their land and homes; hunger was commonplace; and every bank in the nation was about to be closed. I was lucky: I had a scholarship that credited so many hours of work in the library against so much tuition. I was young and healthy and had my share of dreams.

The day was ominously overcast, and became more so as we approached Washington, forty miles south. Thick dark clouds hung over us; I was certain it would rain, and rain heavily. We had no tickets or credentials. The idea was to get as close as possible to the Capitol's East Front, within sight of the Inaugural stand, and find a citizen's perch for the ceremonies. My friend at the wheel knew nothing of the complexities of Washington traffic, and we drove around the city's circles and broad boulevards trying to find a place to park. Soldiers and policemen were everywhere; flags and bunting hung from every lamppost. But there was no hint of festivity in the air. Small knots of people had begun to line the sidewalks (it was late morning), but for the most part they appeared dispirited and sullen. We parked not very far from the Capitol, on a quiet, tree-lined street with neat, clean row houses with white stoops. It was a poor, black neighborhood. I was dressed for the day in the clothes of the time: a dark-blue vested suit (no jeans, of course), a long dark winter overcoat, and a snappy gray fedora with a huge brim. (The suit, as I recall, was a hideous shade of blue, and had come with two pairs of pants, for thirty-two dollars.) In my pocket I carried binoculars.

We worked our way fairly close to the Capitol before being stopped by a Marine guard. With extreme amiability, he asked for our tickets. He then gave us a friendly wink and pointed at a nearby icicle-laden, leafless tree. My friend and I scrambled into the tree and surveyed the special nexus of the nation that spread out before us. The white dome of the Capitol was gray, partly obscured by wisps of fog. The official grandstand was filling up with top-hatted dignitaries, all bundled up against the expected downpour. There must have been a hundred thousand people spread out over the vast Capitol grounds. For the first time, I examined my neighbors in our particular tree, each on a separate bare limb: an elderly gentleman in rumpled and ancient green tweeds, with patches; a beautiful red-headed young woman wrapped in a skimpy coat of rabbit, or of some other unfortunate domestic animal; a woman of indeterminate age who can best be described as dressed in rags, and whose face was lined with worry and pain. For the moment, at least, we were precariously snug in our tree house, waiting for a President to be inaugurated. President or no President, I had a hard time taking my eyes off the redhead; we subsequently became close friends.

The ceremonies were scheduled to start at noon. Noon came and went. The crowd was strangely silent. One could sense the unease. Rumors began to spread through the crowd, called up to the tree people by the less fortunate groundlings. Rumor: A mob somewhere along Pennsylvania Avenue had broken through police lines and surrounded the car containing President Hoover and President-elect Roosevelt. Rumor: Machine guns had been spotted along the route of the cavalcade from the White House to the Capitol. Rumor: Roosevelt had been wounded by an assassin's bullet, perhaps fatally. The lady in rags prayed quietly in the tree: "No more trouble, please, God. No more trouble." The man in the patched tweeds said that he had known all along that something terrible was going to happen on this day, and that one man's leaving office and another man's taking over would have no effect: only revolution would turn things right side up, once and for all. Nonsense, said the redhead; have a little faith, and don't fall out of the tree. Suddenly, there was a stirring in the crowd. The red-coated Marine band directly in front of the grandstand began to play. I pulled out my binoculars and focussed straight ahead. President Hoover, glum and downcast, appeared and took a seat in a leather armchair to the left of the rostrum. A sound like the rustling of otherworldly leaves went through the crowd. Far away, through the giant center doors of the Capitol, appeared the President-elect. His face was totally without color. He made his way, painfully and slowly, along the ramp leading to the rostrum, leaning heavily on the arm of

his son James. He seemed to be drawing on bottomless reservoirs of physical and mental strength to make the short journey to the rostrum and the Presidency. The crowd held its collective breath. I doubt whether anybody, at that moment, knew that he was carrying ten pounds of heavy steel around his crippled and wasted legs.

I spotted the white-bearded Chief Justice, Charles Evans Hughes. He was wearing an odd black skullcap. As he delivered the oath of office, Roosevelt repeated every word of it in frighteningly solemn tones. Once power had passed into his hands, he seized it kinetically, with a vigor and force that stunned the throng. Both hands firmly gripped the rostrum. “This is preëminently the time to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly,” he said, in a clear and unforgettable voice. “This great Nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper. So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance. In every dark hour of our national life a leadership of frankness and vigor has met with that understanding and support of the people themselves which is essential to victory. . . . Yet our distress comes from no failure of substance. We are stricken by no plague of locusts. . . . Plenty is at our doorstep, but a generous use of it languishes in the very sight of the supply. Primarily this is because rulers of the exchange of mankind’s goods have failed through their own stubbornness and their own incompetence, have admitted their failure, and have abdicated. . . . The money changers have fled from their high seats in the temple of our civilization. We may now restore that temple to the ancient truths. . . . Happiness lies not in the mere possession of money; it lies in the joy of achievement, in the thrill of creative effort. . . . Restoration calls, however, not for changes in ethics alone. This Nation asks for action, and action now. Our greatest primary task is to put people to work. This is no unsolvable problem if we face it wisely and courageously. . . . We do not distrust the future of essential democracy. The people of the United States have not failed. . . . They have asked for discipline and direction under leadership. They have made me the present instrument of their wishes. In the spirit of the gift, I take it.”

The crowd had come to life. It shouted approval. Roosevelt, still holding tightly to the rostrum, gave no sign of satisfaction. His expression was as grim as when he had started to speak. The ceremony was over. “I think we’ll live,” said the redhead as we climbed down from the tree. The man in tweeds burst into tears. “You know something?” said my college friend. “It never rained.”

For many years, I have kept a tattered bulletin board in the kitchen, every inch covered with tacked-up addresses, memos, cards from loved ones, stray quotations from Shakespeare and Yeats (life-sustaining forces). Among them is an old, pockmarked newspaper photograph of F.D.R. leaning on a cane and listening intently to two ragged men who appear to have stopped him somewhere. I have no idea where the picture came from, but it is one of my priceless treasures. One of the men is small and scrappy-looking. His hands are in his pockets, and he is leaning into Roosevelt’s face. The other man, larger and older, is wearing an ancient greatcoat, and is unshaved. Roosevelt’s gray hat is somewhat smashed. He is being attentive to every word that is being said to him. The caption reads, “He knew how to listen.”

Since that far-off Inauguration, I have learned that the family Bible on which Franklin Roosevelt took the oath of office lay open to the thirteenth chapter of I Corinthians—to “And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.”

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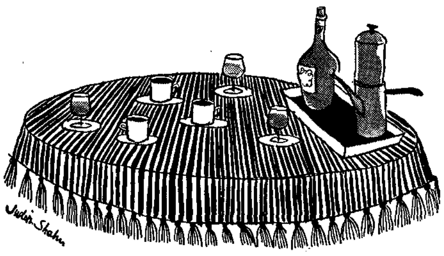
The Mountain Gorilla

A ROOM on the second floor of the Harvard Club was noisy and cheerful the other evening. Scores of people had gathered for the fourth forum of the Animal Research and Conservation Center (ARC), to hear, and see, a report on the mountain-gorilla population of the Virunga region of central Africa, which straddles the borders of Rwanda, Zaire, and Uganda. “There are only three remaining populations of *Gorilla gorilla beringei*, which is one of three subspecies of the gorilla,” we were told by Dr. Archie Carr III, the assistant director of the ARC. “But even though there has been a lot of interest in its plight we didn’t expect such a big turnout as this. Interest in the mountain gorilla is obviously pretty high. Some people we’d naturally expect to be here. There’s William Conway, of course; our headquarters are at the Bronx Zoo, and he’s very supportive. And I see that Harold Coolidge has come; he’s practically the dean of world primatology. But so many other people! It’s encouraging, to say the least.”



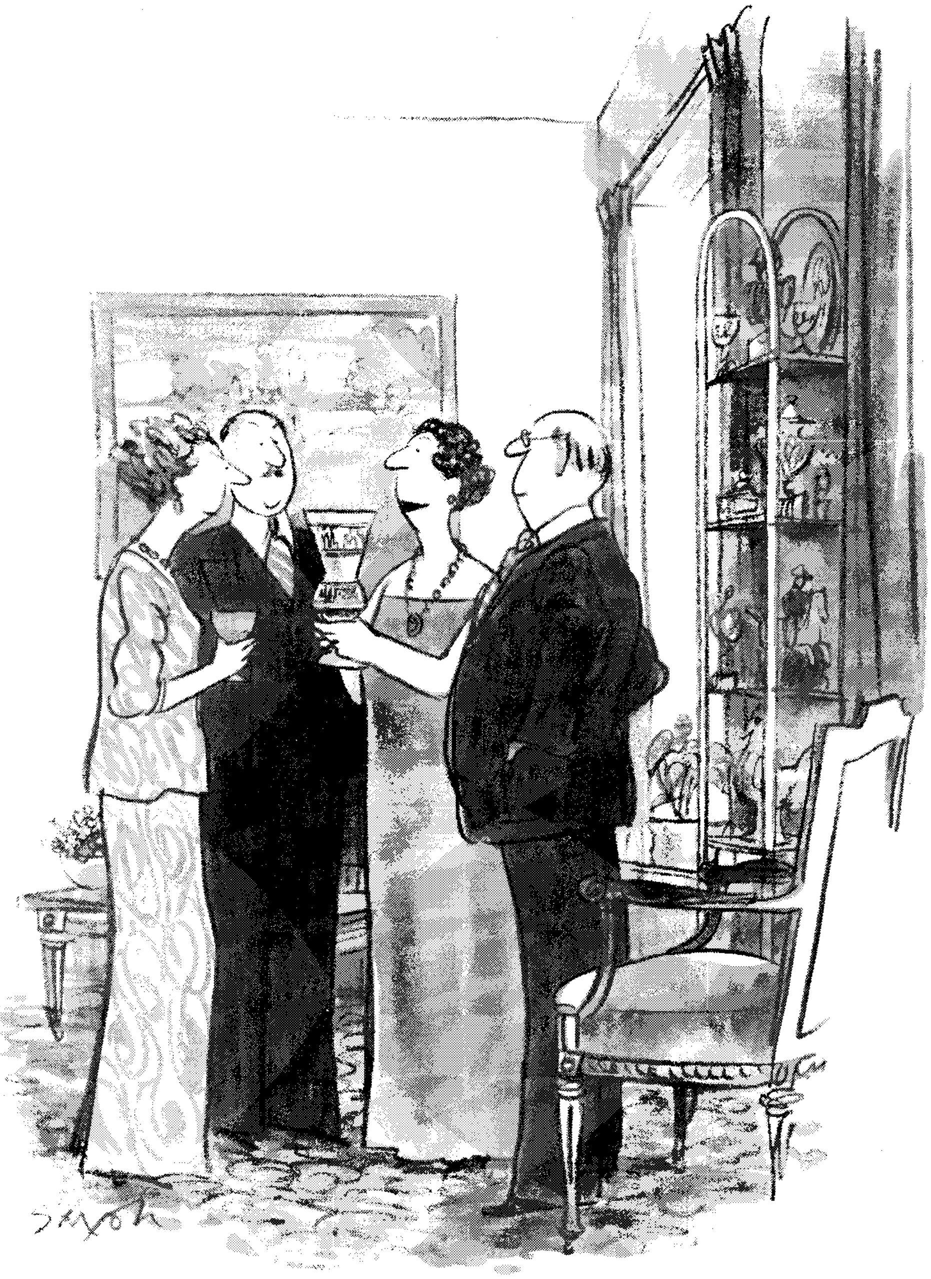
Quickly, Dr. Carr sketched the history of the ARC. The ARC had held three previous forums of this sort at irregular intervals, he said, he himself having provided the material for the first one, when he gave a talk about the barrier reef of Belize, a spectacular formation of coral. “At our second forum, Professor Stephen Kellert, of the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, spoke to us about public attitudes toward conservation, with emphasis on social factors in the preservation of endangered species,” he continued. “And at the third we heard Dr. Timothy Clark on the research-and-recovery project for the black-footed ferret of Wyoming. We support that project: the ferret is a gravely endangered animal, despite its having had a lot of babies recently. This mountain-gorilla project of ours really seems to have taken off, doesn’t it?” Two of the ARC’s people, he added—Amy Vedder and William Weber—had spent more than two years in Africa collecting material and then two years at the University of Wisconsin collating their data. “We’re now negotiating a project to send them back,” he said, “but it’s not complete yet.”

No doubt everybody in that chatting crowd remembered the tragic story of Digit, the mountain gorilla with which the field researcher Dian Fossey had shared a unique experience years ago when she was observing the species. We had watched on the TV screen the historic moment when the gorilla, after some days of seeing Dr. Fossey on the fringes of the group, actually moved close enough to her to touch her and be touched in return. It was the first recorded evidence of such an encounter between a wild gorilla and a human being, and, among other things, it proved that human beings need not assume that wild gorillas are always ferocious, dangerous beasts. Then came the shocking news that Digit had been killed by poachers, sacrificing himself to defend his band. This story and the gloomy statistics of the general shrinking of the mountain-gorilla population made the outlook for the species bleak.

Eventually, we were requested to move into the next room, where chairs were arranged before a lecture platform and a screen for slides. The meeting was opened by Dr. Conway, the general director of the Bronx Zoo, who introduced Dr. George B. Schaller, the director of the ARC. Dr. Schaller, who is well known for his work on—among other species—the mountain gorilla, told us that he and his wife had started observing the gorilla a quarter of a century ago, and that this work had been carried on by others to the present day. The mature male gorilla, he reminded us, is known as a silverback, because the hair on its back turns gray or white. Next, he genially introduced the man he referred to as our own silverback, Dr. Harold Jefferson Coolidge. Dr. Coolidge, who is seventy-nine years old, stood up to acknowledge the affectionate applause that followed. Amy Vedder and William Weber, continued Dr. Schaller, made an excellent team, because in addition to observing the animal itself they had studied conservation by considering the social factors that have set man against the gorilla. Miss Vedder is concerned with the animal, Mr. Weber with the situation of the gorilla among the human beings surrounding it. "Without more ado," Dr. Schaller concluded, "I call on Amy first."

Miss Vedder spoke briefly of the gorilla's daily routine—how it eats voraciously soon after waking up, takes a rest in the middle of the day, and then begins to eat again. We saw accompanying slides of mountain gorillas—animals with longer hair than their cousins the lowland gorillas—eating, sleeping, and playing, the younger ones wrestling and romping. We heard about their family grouping around the silverback. Then Miss Vedder gave way to Mr. Weber, who told us that the human population of Rwanda is increasing at an alarming rate, thanks to modern medicine and various other factors. He showed us pictures of crowded pathways and streets, and long-distance pictures of mountainsides under intensive cultivation. "The population density of Rwanda is now two hundred and thirty to the square kilometre," he said impressively.

We looked back at our notes on Miss Vedder's talk. In the nineteen-sixties, in the Virunga region, there were between four and five hundred gorillas living in the wild. In 1973, there were approximately two hundred and seventy. In 1978, there were two fewer, but—and here there sounded a note of hope, however forlorn—the observers counted more infants, and in 1981, though there had been a slight decline in the over-all population, there was in Rwanda, at least, a slight increase. This, Miss Vedder and Mr. Weber think, is due to recent efforts to instill a new outlook into human Rwandans. Propaganda work, especially in the schools, has had its effect. The children get booklets with pictures of the gorilla labelled "Ingagi," the Rwandan name for the mountain gorilla; the booklets are popular, and so are lessons that are given now and then, and illustrated with slides, about the animal and its attractions. Adult Rwandans have learned that the tourist industry is better for the



"As I understand it, Queen Hatshepsut had this made in upper Egypt, to dedicate it to the god Amun Ra. Then it was carried off from the Valley of the Kings by adventurers, and Lester picked it up at Altman's for my birthday."

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commonweal than slaughter of the few animals left, which merely enriches poachers. Mr. Weber showed slides of local guards armed and ready to defend their gorillas against poachers. There were pictures, too, of a few hardy tourist guides who had learned to approach the gorilla bands carefully and peacefully.

All in all, we left the hall with an upbeat feeling most unusual in connection with this subject. Just possibly, we reflected, Digit has not died in vain.

Guitar String

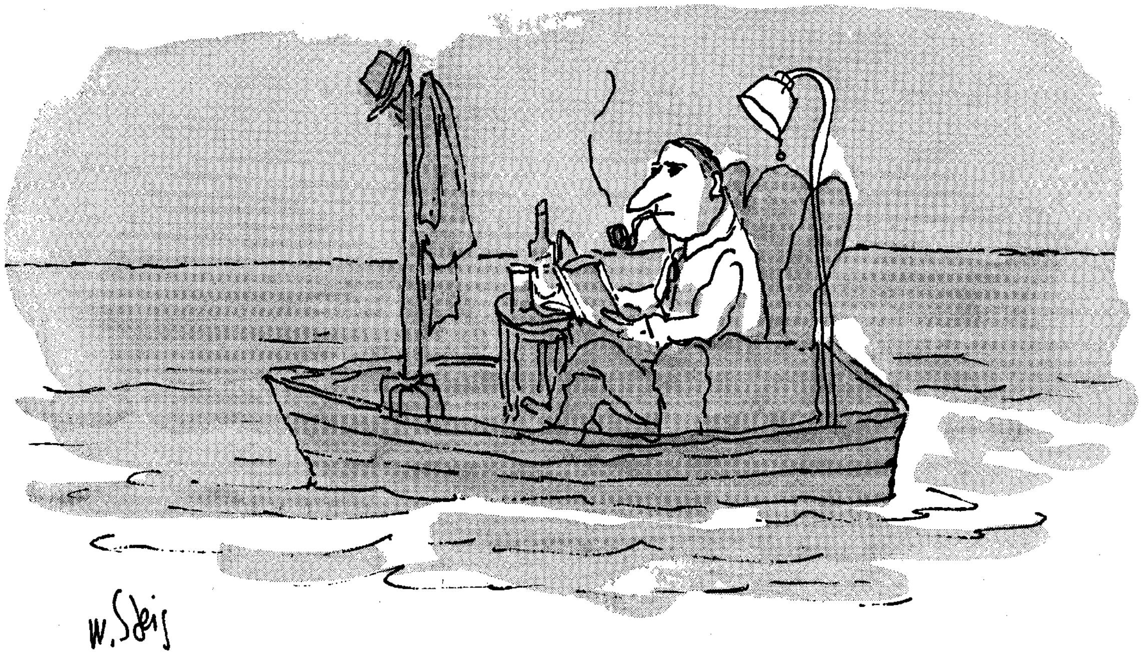
ROSE AUGUSTINE's factory, situated several floors above a cuckoo-clock manufacturer in a twelve-story building on West Twenty-fifth Street, churns out thirty miles of guitar string a day. ("I used to tell people three miles, but then I refigured it and found I'd messed up a decimal place," Mrs. Augustine told us.) Which means that in just eight and a half days the lathelike machines in Mrs. Augustine's factory can produce a guitar string long enough to be held at one end by the residents of Rochester, New York, and at the other end by the citizens of Cleveland, Ohio, and strummed. Actually, the strings at Mrs. Augustine's factory are cut in lengths of between thirty-eight and forty-one inches, depending on how far up the neck of the guitar they will be tied. Still, that's a lot of string. "There are more guitar players in this world than you'd ever dream," Mrs. Augustine said happily. Once the strings are cut, they are sorted according to width and packed in plastic bags, which are then heat-sealed and packed in cardboard cartons, which are then stacked at one end of the workroom. "I can tell by looking at the height of a stack of boxes what we have enough of. When a pile gets too high, I tell them to switch to another width of string," Mrs. Augustine said.

Considering her order-of-magnitude uncertainty about the volume of her string production, and her less than scientific approach to inventory, one might be tempted to worry over Mrs. Augustine's ability to succeed in the great hurly-burly of American capitalism. If one did that, one would be wasting one's time, for Mrs. Augustine—her firm's only salesman—is an industry leader. Her Augustine Imperial ("The Superior Concert String . . . Played by the Great Masters") sells and sells and sells, as well it should, for it is a direct descendant of the first guitar string of the modern era, which was designed by Mrs. Augustine's late husband, Albert—sometimes referred to as "the rescuer of the classical guitar."

"Strings used to be made of silk and gut," Mrs. Augustine explained. "But during the Second World War there was a terrible shortage, because all the warring nations were using all the top-grade silk and gut for sutures. There was almost nothing left for instruments. My husband, who was a guitarmaker, was desperate. He went down to the war-surplus stores on Canal Street, and he saw these big spools of rejected nylon. It was used then—and still is—as fishing leader. Most of the nylon on the spool would be rough, but he could usually find enough smooth sections to make some strings. Shortly afterward, he was with Andrés Segovia, the greatest guitar player. My husband saw that Segovia had a nylon string on his guitar, and learned that some man from du Pont had given it to him. But only one. Segovia told my husband he would be in seventh heaven if he could get the first three strings in nylon."

With a rebuilt binocular grinder—also procured on Canal Street—Mrs. Augustine and her husband set to work making strings. They surprised du Pont with their request for nylon; soon after the war ended, company officials had approached most of the established stringmakers, who, for reasons of professional conservatism and self-interest ("A nylon string will last a long time; a gut string may not last an hour before you need a new one," Mrs. Augustine said), had told du Pont that the new material wouldn't work. But work it did. "It was a godsend. It was the first real change in stringmaking in hundreds of years. My husband is credited with being one of the leaders of the guitar revolution, even though he didn't really want to make strings. He wanted to make, and always did make, guitars."

Mrs. Augustine was in on the business from the beginning, helping out in their first workshop, which was in the basement of the building they lived in, on Central Park West. ("It was strictly illegal to have a factory in a residential building, so we had all these lights rigged up to warn us if an inspector came by, or anything.") As her husband's health gradually declined, Mrs. Augustine became more and more important to the business. When her husband died, in 1967, she took charge of the company, and soon thereafter she left her other work, as a science teacher in Bayside and East Harlem public schools. "When I first stopped teaching, I wanted to do social work," she told us. "But I found that all they wanted was my presence, my warm body on the spot, and not my

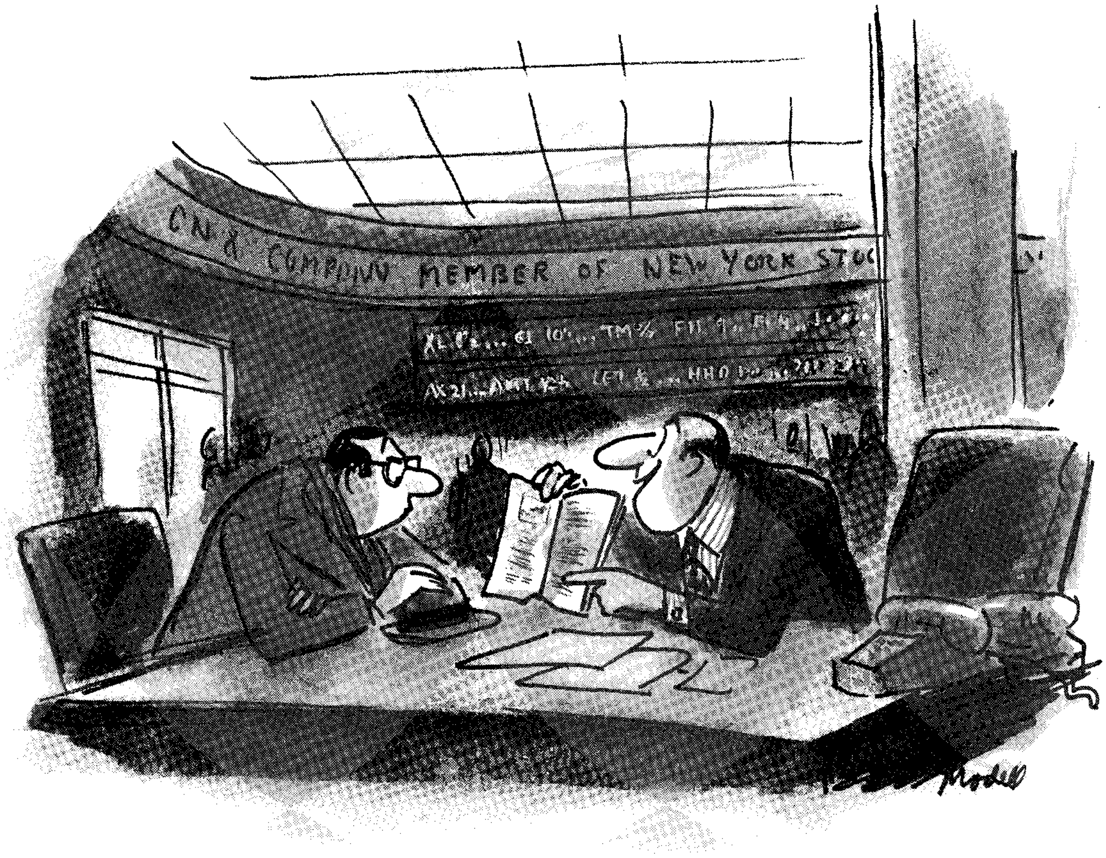


Evening Alone

brains. It just seemed a social-butterfly sort of thing. So I concentrated on the business." Hard-nosed, but not too hard-nosed ("The greatest asset has been that it's not a do-or-die thing with me. I'm not desperate about the dollars and the pennies"), Mrs. Augustine has built the business to the point where she has received more than one offer to buy it out. And still her empire grows. Mrs. Augustine sponsors a guitar-concert series at the 92nd Street Y, and she recently bought *Guitar Review*, a classy quarterly with articles like "Aristocratic Patronage and the Spanish Guitar in the Seventeenth Century" and "The History of Apoyando."

Finally, we asked the big question.

"Do I like the guitar?" Mrs. Augustine replied, with a smile. "I hate the guitar—I told Segovia that years ago. Segovia lived with us for years, and I wouldn't let him give me lessons. I go to three or four concerts a week—it's important for the business. And I like the guitarists very much. But I don't really enjoy the concerts. I worry too much. Not about the strings breaking but about the artists, the music. The guitar is a very difficult instrument to listen to. The volume is very small. Personally, I don't believe that it should be played in large concert halls. I have an awful lot of guitar records, but I don't go much out of my way to listen to them."


& COMPANY MEMBER OF NEW YORK STO
Modell

"Now, here's a sweetheart of a stock with your name written all over it."

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Coiffures

HERE are some things we learned at a party celebrating the silver anniversary of the Helene Curtis Ten Best Coiffured Women Awards, in the Crystal Room of Regine's the other evening:

Beverly Sills is in the Ten Best Coiffured Women Hall of Fame.

So is Doris Day.

Dustin Hoffman's coiffure for the movie "Tootsie" was created by a hairstylist named George Masters.

George Masters—who has styled the hair of Jennifer Jones, Cyd Charisse, Ann-Margret, and Marilyn Monroe, among others—considers himself shy.

Many other hairstylists also consider themselves shy.

If you want your family and friends to sit up and take notice of a new, improved you, you will change your hairstyle.

Allen Edwards is responsible for giving Raquel Welch a new look. "We talked for a long time about cutting off her hair," Mr. Edwards told us. "Short hair is more appropriate for Raquel at this stage of her career. So, finally, one day she came in and said, 'Let's do it.' Raquel actually cried when I cut her hair, but she loves the result."

Cutting hair is an art.

Julius Bengtsson, who is Nancy Reagan's official hairstylist, often travels aboard Air Force One.

Robin Weir, who is another of Mrs. Reagan's hairstylists, frequently does the First Lady's hair in Washington.

You should learn to trust your personal hairstylist.

Lori Davis, who dyed Jane Fonda's hair red for "The China Syndrome," and who streaked Miss Fonda's hair for "On Golden Pond," is leaving Miss Fonda's hair natural for her forthcoming TV movie, "The Dollmaker."

Arlene Dahl is as beautiful as ever. "I've always believed that beauty begins at the top," she said.

Toni Tennille is also as beautiful as ever, but now her hair—formerly brown and straight—is ash blond and wavy. "It's so important how you feel when you go out there and everybody's looking at you," she said.

You should dare to be different.

Monsieur Marc is still another of Mrs. Reagan's hairstylists. "When I style a woman's hair, I try to make her look as I would want her to look if I were taking her out that night," he said.

Suga, of New York, gave Marie Osmond her first grownup hairstyle.

If you look like a million on Monday and like two cents on Tuesday, your image and your fashion look will suffer.

You should always strive for an image and style that are *you*.

Ronald Gidwitz, the president of Helene Curtis, believes that we have all come a long way from the days when a hairstylist worked in a "beauty parlor" and was known as an "operator."

Ronald Gidwitz has brown hair.

THE LORGNETTE

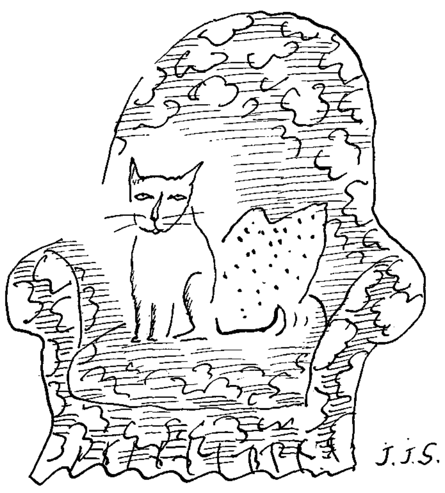
WE make rather fanciful provisions toward the autumn or the winter of our lives—provisions not to repair the irreparable but to mitigate the inevitable.

Many years ago, in a narrow, winding, climbing cobblestoned street in the Old City in Geneva, I stumbled onto a minute junk-and-jewelry antique shop, and, once inside, onto a beautiful, heavy Art Deco gold lorgnette. I bought it as a lark, got it for a song, and put it away at the bottom of my jewel box. And forgot about it, as, for many years, I watched my contemporaries, one by one, acquire brand-new spectacles. *I* could still read the small print. It was marvellous—like cheating, but with a sense of elation rather than guilt. I could not be held down to anything as disciplinary as a yearly checkup, but I remember once asking an eye man, "Isn't it time for reading glasses?" And he answered, with that particularly felicitous gift for dialogue which doctors must have possessed long before Molière, "Can't *wait* to be an old lady, eh?" But finally the inevitable happened. As the print receded and my arm straightened, I knew that the time had come. So I ordered half-glasses for reading and writing, and life continued, except that I kept misplacing them. You need glasses in every room, like telephones. Months went by, and then I remembered the lorgnette. A lorgnette, and long ropes of pearls. I had both, so why not give them a try? I changed the prescription in the lenses of the lorgnette and hung it on a chain around my neck. Opening it up, bringing it up to my eyes, moving it out of the way to speak or listen, and folding it up again—these were all pleasurable little movements of the sort that attend pleasurable little ceremonies such as smoking cigarettes or taking snuff. At first I wore the lorgnette only in the evenings, to restaurants, concerts, and the theatre. But then I became used to it, and missed it when I didn't have it on. I started slipping it under my sweater or jacket in the mornings, so that I never had to fish deep into my handbag before I could experience that start of recognition at the handwriting on an envelope; I could look up a quotation in Bartlett's at a moment's notice, as well as decipher the additives on a packet of frozen food. A woman friend asked my permission to acquire a lorgnette. A man, English, said to me across a dinner table, "Perhaps I should get myself a monocle." The lorgnette had become a true prop from which I could not separate myself. I was like the music critic with an ear trumpet who had fascinated me as a child.

By the time one gets farsighted, one often has grown children. I have two. And if it is true that the image we have of ourselves does not exactly coincide with reality, the image grown children have of their parents is not only preconceived, it is heavily fictional. My younger son found me, a few months ago, peaceably horizontal on my living-room couch, wearing red tights, with my shoes off, reading the *National Enquirer*. All hell broke loose: "My dignified old mother, and now *this*." The "dignified" I accepted, more or less.

Not long ago, this son of mine had his twenty-fifth birthday. I carefully chose to give him one of those kitschy black lacquered Russian boxes with the troikas painted on them—something that had always been around and that I knew he liked. I also carefully chose a restaurant a block away from my office, where we could have lunch. I did not wear red tights. Through the lorgnette, of which he had always approved, I found chili on the menu. I reproved him for smoking, but only once, and did not speak of birthday resolutions. We really did have an idyllic time. But I was in the middle of some work, and he had a translation deadline, so we were soon out again in the mild sunshine in this mildest of winters.

I felt careless, the way one does at times, with that slight recklessness which often goes with joy. My fur coat was wide open, and that periodic, stupid, and usually fateful thought came into my head—"I haven't had a cold in a long time"—and at that moment I felt a hard snap at the back of my neck, and nothing more. I closed my eyes. (I have had this most unfortunate reflex in times of stress ever since I can remember. I make a great witness at calamities.) Immediately, I groped for the lorgnette, but it wasn't there. The chain, strange to say, was. Then I became aware of being surrounded, and two voices asked simultaneously, "Are you all right?"



"Of course I'm all right," I said, in a distinctly social tone of voice, although my next thought was that the "of course" didn't make much sense. Then I turned around, to see people stopped in their tracks, with their heads turned backward. Frozen they were, like George Segal sculptures, while, beyond them, a young man ran like lightning, and behind him ran another young man—my son. The thief was tall and spare, and, in his running shoes, unbelievably fast.

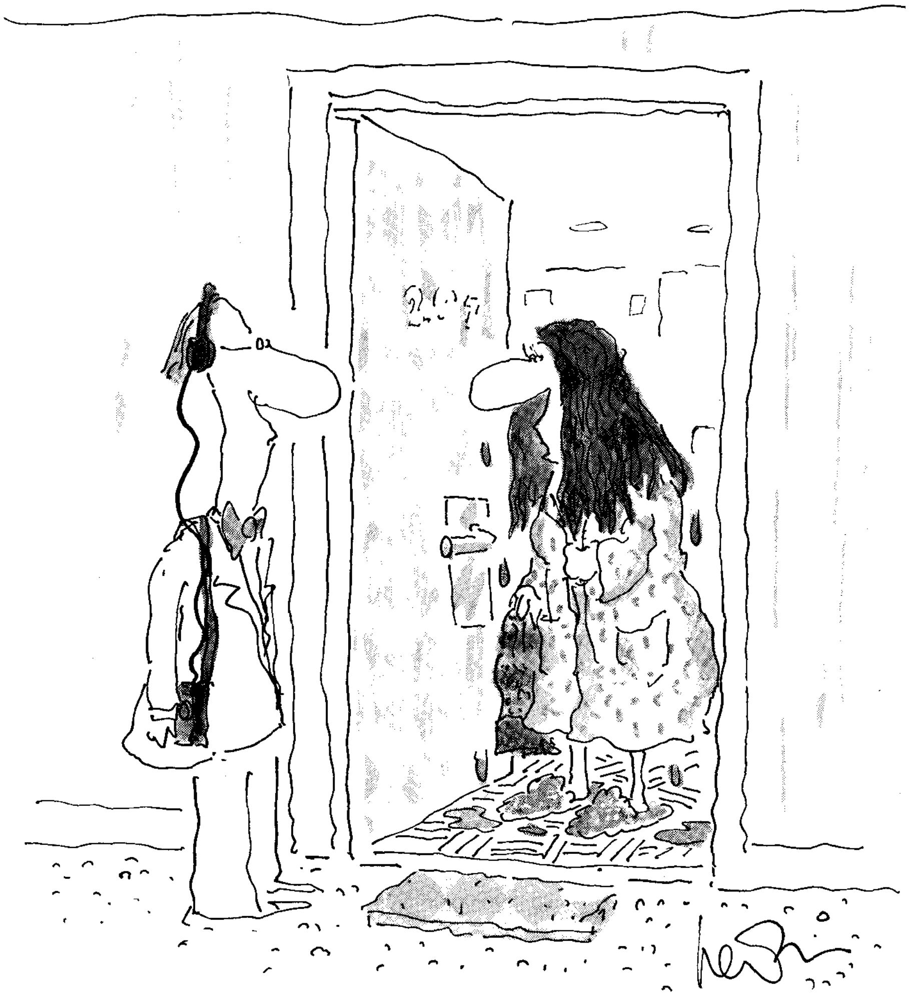
Soon my son was back at my side, out of breath, unsuccessful, and safe. "How did he manage it?" I asked, for my son does *not* close his eyes.

"He walked past you very fast, then came back very suddenly, and then just ran."

We resumed our short walk back to the office in the mild sunshine. "Fleet of foot, wasn't he?" I ventured.

"So fleet of foot," said my son, "that he found the time to turn around twice to taunt me."

That afternoon, I felt generally uneasy, with a tendency to blurt out to anyone what had happened. But two thoughts consoled me. First, that my son had pursued the thief. I would have felt very bad if he hadn't. I always remember dining out in a coffee shop with a young friend one night when the kitchen caught on fire. Huge, long red-and-yellow tongues of flame came lapping into the room from the partition, but my young friend froze. His hand felt small and moist in mine as I slowly led him out of the coffee shop, while, with a diminishing wail of the siren, a fire engine stopped outside. We are still good friends, but since that evening my feelings about him have changed. My second thought was that outside of automatically shutting my eyes I had managed



"You're on the wrong floor. The Museum of Modern Art is downstairs."

to behave within reason. (What is this remnant of boarding-school morality that underlines behaving well at moments when one shouldn't have to behave at all but simply be?) Not long ago, a block away from my house and right in front of me, a young woman had a gold chain snapped from her neck, and she collapsed on the pavement in hysterics. As I tried to comfort her, I noted that her remaining jewels were from Bulgari. "Insured, for sure" was all I could think. I felt totally pitiless. Never mind what is loosely termed a "violation;" the loss of a gold chain, no matter how heavy, or of a beloved lorgnette is small cause for hysterics in my book.

During the day, I had decided not to call the police. What was the use, I thought. But a friend to whom I had blurted the story called around seven that evening. He said, "That kind of object will probably have to go through a pawnshop, so, who knows, you might get lucky. Call the police."

I called the appropriate precinct house, where an even-voiced woman told me that two officers would soon appear at my house. I appreciated the unexpected importance given to the matter but felt tepid about the actual visit. What intimidated me was the prospect of having to explain a lorgnette to two police officers. I switched on the news. A fire out of control, two murders, a child defenestrated by its grandmother, a President dazed by a question from the press, a weather announcer who gets paid hundreds of thousands of dollars for not looking out the window. And here I sat lamenting the loss of a lorgnette. I put the kettle on to have hot water ready to make coffee or tea for the police officers. I had misplaced my reading glasses. When I found them, I read Turgenev. A dear friend called, and I blurted it all out once again. "Oh, you're welcome to one of my two lorgnettes," she said. "They're gold, and they're sitting here on the round table with all the objects. There are far too many objects on that table anyway."

Shortly before midnight, I called the precinct house and told the even-, now patient-voiced woman I had spoken to at seven o'clock that I was dead with fatigue and wanted to go to bed. "But the officers are on their way," she said. "Hang on. They'll be there in five minutes."

"Oh please call them off," I begged. "I don't need to see anyone. I'll just make a deposition." Whereupon she gave me the number of a complaint room that I could call the next day.

The complaint room was a constant busy signal. I called the precinct house, and a new but again terribly polite woman's voice said, "You want to talk to a desk officer. Hold on."

When I finished my story, the desk officer said, "No. You see, a pawnshop doesn't come into this. These people sell directly to the jewellers."

So that was that. I did choose one of the two lorgnettes that had been proffered, and gave my friend two little rings in exchange. The new lorgnette is heavy, with lots of gold markings. I am not used to it. It is an interesting, even a handsome, object to keep on a table, but it cannot be worn, because closed it resembles a fanciful obstetrical device. Open, it looks like two curved measuring spoons. I have not yet changed the prescription inside the measuring spoons, and the lorgnette lies at the bottom of my jewel box. Last night, as I was undressing for bed, the chain, which I had never bothered to take off my neck, fell in a heap at my feet on the floor. One of the sailor-knot links had been stretched open by the thief.

As for my old lorgnette: to quote a friend, "The odds are on objects." Particularly, I have always felt, good gold objects. Gold is a solid, warm, lively, surviving metal. My old lorgnette is older than I am, and will no doubt outlive me.

—NATACHA STEWART

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DEPARTMENT OF DELICACY

[From Contact, the newspaper of the United Methodist Church in Oklahoma]

From that production, Lara went on to perform on Broadway in "The Best Little Warehouse in Texas."

HIGHER EDUCATION

WHEN Leda leaves Module A after collecting her last set of final exams, Mr. Pucinski is waiting for her. It is their first meeting, but Leda knows him at once; he is the same Walter Pucinski, slender and dark, who has smiled from her TV screen a hundred times and said, in round, plain-dealing tones, "Pucinski. In southern Michigan, we're real estate for real people." In person, wearing a well-tailored navy topcoat, Mr. Pucinski appears compact, almost doll-like, and Leda remembers something she has often read—that the camera adds at least ten pounds.

"Miss Harrison?" His voice remains television-size. "I'm Walter Pucinski." He takes her mittened hand and pumps it.

"Of course," Leda says. "Nice to know you." She smiles and lets him wind up the handshake, hoping he'll evaporate. Then she can bicycle back to her trailer, pour a drink, and shed the box-pleated skirt and tired blazer she always teaches in. Leda's appointment at Vespasian Community College is temporary—a single year without prospect of renewal—and she hasn't bothered to buy any decent clothes.

Mr. Pucinski returns the smile and falls into step beside Leda. "I am certain you're up to your eyebrows in correcting themes, but, please, I would just like to confer with you a minute about my Karl." Leda is curious that he has no accent. "If I may just accompany you to your car—"

"Bike, I'm afraid. I don't own a car."

"Bicycle, that's a wonderful means of travelling. But you must find it limiting."

"Sometimes," Leda admits, glad he's making conversation, putting off the subject of his son.

At eleven, Karl Pucinski is the youngest student in her classes and in the history of Vespasian Community College. He is a math prodigy, a natural at the computer keyboard. The math courses Vespasian offers are far beneath him, but to meet the requirements for special admission to Michigan State—his goal—he must pass Leda's course in Introductory Composition. There are two problems: Karl writes like an eleven-year-old, and Leda, who week after week watches his narrow, white face for a change of expression, finds him deeply repellent. The worst thing about Karl—and she has given much thought to selecting it as the worst—is his uncanny control. Classmates two and three times h age shift childishly in their seats an crunch on taco chips, while Karl sit at perfect, self-possessed attention. Leda worked hard to like Karl, eve as she marked his papers with red F's but now she has given up. She's kep count of the F's and awaited repercussions: from the dean of the college, who hungers for a homegrow prodigy, and above all from Karl' parents, who she assumes live vicariously through his genius. How else could they live, in a town as dea as Vespasian? There are even Amis here, knocking around in horse-and buggy.

She and Mr. Pucinski reach the bik rack. As always, her bike is the onl one there. Vespasian students, squeez ing in classes between jobs or farm work, invariably drive—pickups and Trans Ams with flames spray-painted on the hood. Leda stoops to open he lock and unthread the heavy chain Mr. Pucinski observes her without word, and she guesses he is preparing a plea for Karl. But instead he says "Looks like snow."

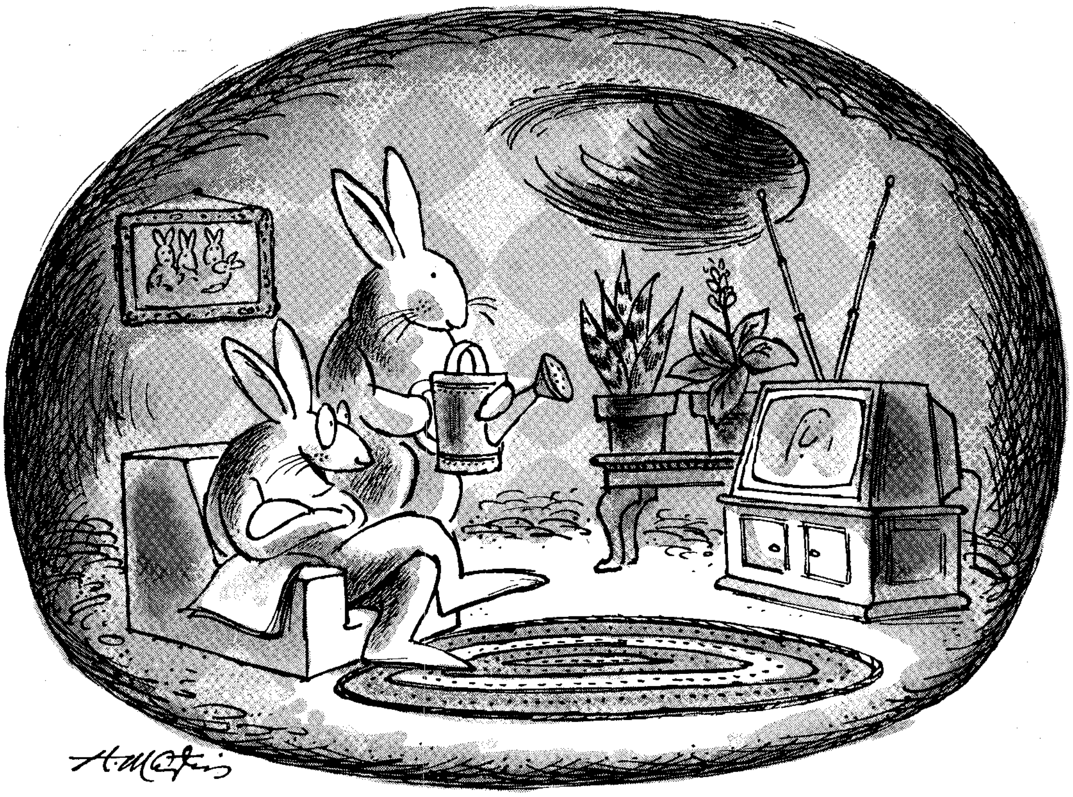
"Sure does," Leda answers equably

"We get a good deal of snow here," Mr. Pucinski says. "I hope you are skilled at bicycling on ice." There is a note close to concern in his voice.

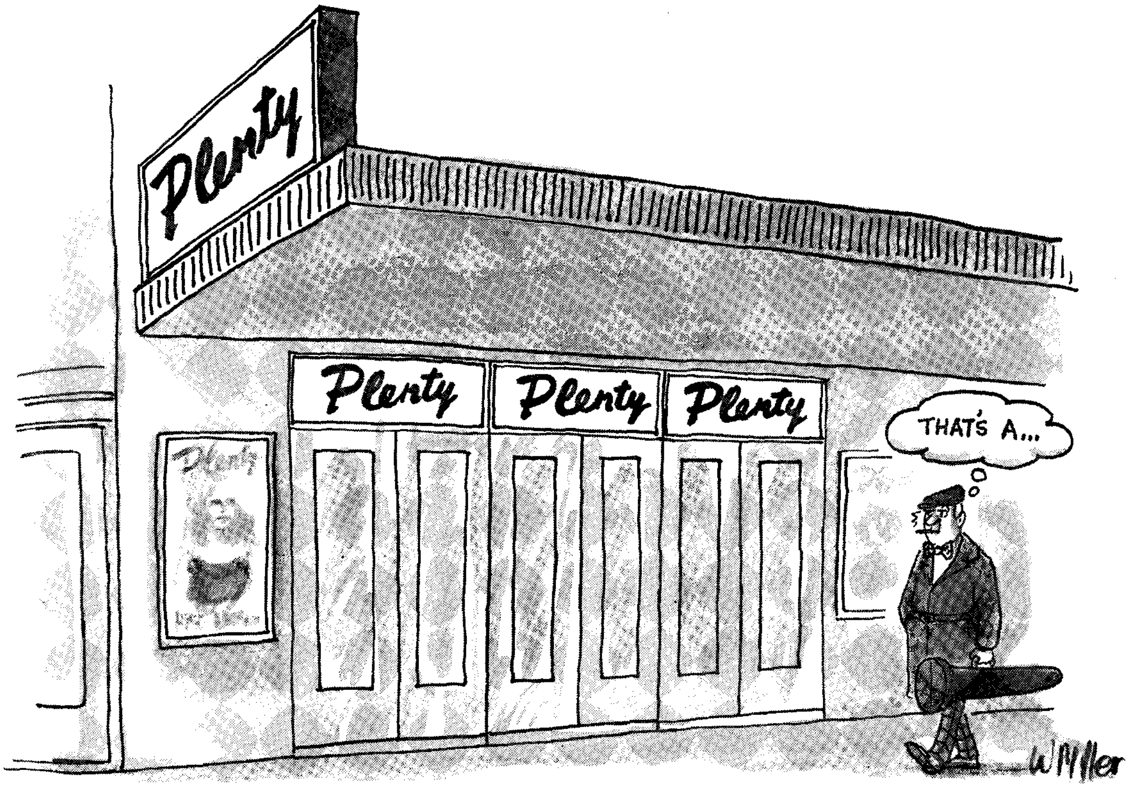
Leda says, "I'll manage," though she has been worrying about the coming ice herself. She tugs at her knapsack to spread the weight evenly over her shoulders, and to appear pressed for time.

"Miss Harrison," Mr. Pucinski says quickly, "let me present my case to you straight. Karl needs two semesters of composition to be accepted at the university. The math, the science, I'm not concerned—he can do it himself. But composition seems to be different. That is where you come in. Will Karl pass?"

"I don't know. It depends." Leda's eyes sweep over his head and settle on the cluster of boxy, low-rise buildings



"Frank Field says winter's back may be broken."



that make up V.C.C.'s campus. The buildings have pebbly façades, as though they had been gravelled, and are distinguished by orange stencilling on their glass doors as Modules A, B, D, J, and K.

"C," Leda says absently. "Karl needs a C on the essay he just handed in, which counts as his final exam. With a C, I can pass him on the basis of improvement." She has instant second thoughts about her generosity—Karl shouldn't pass, he doesn't deserve it.

"I think we can guarantee a C," Mr. Pucinski says. His small head jerks up and down vigorously. Leda has a feeling of plunging into a trap.

"As I'm sure you know, Karl finds writing difficult," she says. "And his being a bit young for college-level assignments—that makes it more difficult."

"Karl is a genius." Mr. Pucinski thrusts both hands into his topcoat pockets as if they hold proof—a scrawled theorem, a scrap of printout from Karl's computer.

Leda flares, a little. It's the first time in months she's felt anything like anger. "I know," she says, "but it's a question of verbal skills—"

"What does it matter? He's a brilliant boy—no student on this campus can touch him. I don't believe they are verbally skilled, either."

Leda, who quite agrees with him, feels her small, lame spurt of interest die.

"I know Karl will pass," presses Mr. Pucinski.

"I hope so," she says mildly. "I'm glad we talked; it's good that you know the situation."

Mr. Pucinski is conciliated, and reaches out a hand to pump hers all over again. Leda circumvents him by gripping her handlebars and putting one foot on a pedal. But he won't let her go; drawing close, he pats her on the neck, just above her knapsack. She can see his breath and imagines she feels it.

"I want to tell you something about Karl," Mr. Pucinski says. "I want you to understand how special he is. Last spring, when he was ten years old, he built a computer. I took time off from business—I drove him all over Michigan for parts. His mother takes no interest, she wants him playing Little League. I'm the one who climbs the stairs every night to look at him with his computer. Other children watch television, his mother watches television. How can I explain? In April I took him to a conference on computer technology. For his birthday present, a treat. A learned doctor of computers reads a paper I can't make sense out of, and afterwards Karl goes up to the podium, asks questions, discusses with the other learned doctors. I'm lost. I can't pretend to walk the same ground he does. You know what it reminds me of? The story of Jesus in the Temple at Jerusalem—young Jesus, when he's talking with the elders in their own terms and Mary and Joseph are astonished, think he's disobedient. Well, I'm no Joseph. I encourage Karl, but I'm astounded by the parallel. I just thought of it now—with Christmas coming, I always remember the Bible." Mr. Pucinski is breathing hard but has moved back in order to gesture with both hands. Leda starts to wheel away her bike, putting extra distance between them.

"Do you know that story about Jesus?" he calls.

Leda says she does.

Leda's trailer is part of a court, a couple of miles outside of town, called Flatlands Estates. It is convenient to a factory that makes swing sets and merry-go-rounds and employs most of her neighbors, or used to. There have been layoffs; the couple Leda is subletting from left to try their luck in Tucson. Other couples and families are leaving, too. Leda has seen their packed cars, but she doesn't know where they go—she'd never made an effort to meet them.

This afternoon, before changing out of her school clothes, she stands in her galley-style kitchen and mixes an apéritif—Campari-and-soda. She bought the Campari, a red bottle jacketed with dust, the day her father called from Washington with a Christmas invitation. He said he and his girlfriend, Kathy, planned to ski Christmas week in the Italian Alps, then head south to Pavia, Rome, and Sicily. If Leda liked, he'd ask the travel agent to fix up some tickets for her.

She answered at once, "Thanks a lot, no," and then tried to come up with a good excuse. Her real reason—that she can't bear her father when he is with his twenty-five-year-old lover—wouldn't do. The stark refusal hung in the air. Finally, to say something, she added, "I guess I just couldn't."

If Leda was sure about Italy, was there anyplace else she wanted to go for the holidays, her father asked. He'd be glad to spring for the fare.

Leda had been thinking of visiting friends in the East, but didn't say this. A perverse wish for martyrdom, fuelled by disappointment, swept over her: he hadn't tried to cajole her—he was relieved she wouldn't go.

"I'm staying in Vespasian," she said.

"Do you have friends?" her father asked cautiously. "Are you seeing people?"

"The cashier at the QuikShop, I see her," Leda said. "The man at the liquor store. He's nice."

Her father let this go and asked if she needed a handbag or shoes. Kathy thought she might do some shopping in Rome.

Leda was about to refuse again, smugly, when she had a foreglimpse of herself alone in the trailer on Christmas Day. She would not be opening presents.

"O.K., have Kathy pick something out." She held back a moment, then heard herself say in a small voice, "And could you call me on Christmas? I'd really like to hear from you."

He said he knew Italy, he knew Christmas—the overseas lines would be all tied up. "But we'll keep trying. We'll definitely get in touch during the holidays."

It always disturbed Leda to hear him refer to himself and Kathy collectively, though he'd done it a hundred times. "Fine," she said, eager to escape "we." "Until then."

Leda's parents divorced while she was in college. The split was corrosive, taking three full years to become final. During that time Leda shrank from going home and spent her summers in school. Her mother and father barely noticed that she got her degree in those same bitter three years and won a generous graduate fellowship to Columbia; they weren't in a mood to congratulate anyone.

After the divorce Leda's father decided he was still a young man. He devoted fewer hours to his law firm and took up skiing, travel, vintage wines, and Kathy, who was only a year older than Leda. Leda's mother moved up to Vermont and searched for months before landing a job as part-time manager of Say Cheese, a boutique and restaurant just north of Bennington. On Halloween night, after a few closing drinks with the staff, she drove home through the rain and missed the driveway. Narrowly, but by enough to turn her Toyota head on into an ancient, denuded maple tree. The staff, the police, and Leda's father said it was an accident, a tragic slip. Leda felt it was best to believe them; she was still trying to believe them.

Following the funeral, she did nothing at Columbia for a month but reread her favorite books. Literary comfort was something, she decided, and she attempted, hopefully if not altogether seriously, to think of her mother and father on a grand, fictive scale: Anna and Vronsky, Julien Sorel and Madame de Rênal. It was no good. She'd scarcely seen her parents for years, and neither seemed as vivid or familiar as characters in books. An insulating detachment set in. She was able to imagine coolly that people looked at her father and Kathy and clucked. As for her mother, no one would actually say anything in public, but privately they would call her a loser: for throwing up her hands, deliberately or not, and deserting her only daughter.

AFTER THE REBUILDING

After the rebuilding was done, and
the wood stove finally installed, after
the ripping out of walls, tearing back to
its beams the house he'd lived in, frozen, for over
fifty years, he started mornings up with the world's
most expensive kindling. Not just scraps of red oak from
new flooring, ends of clear birch from kitchen trim, and
knots from #2 pine, but odd-lot pieces of his old life:
window frames clawed from his daughter's lost room,
his grandfather's coat peg, shelving his mother
had rolled her crust on, and lathing first plastered
the year Thoreau moved to Walden. The wood stove itself
was new: the prime heat for four new rooms descended
from seven, the central logic for all the opening up,
for revisions hammered out daily, weeks of roughing-in,
and after months of unfigured costs, the final bevels
and the long returning. Oh, when he first got up to
rekindle the fire of November mornings, he found
that everything held heat: he sweat as he tossed
the chunks in; he found himself burning, burning.

—PHILIP BOOTH

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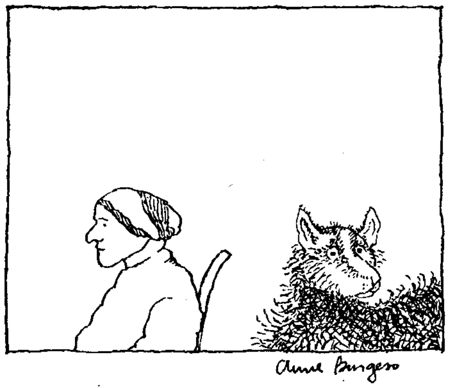
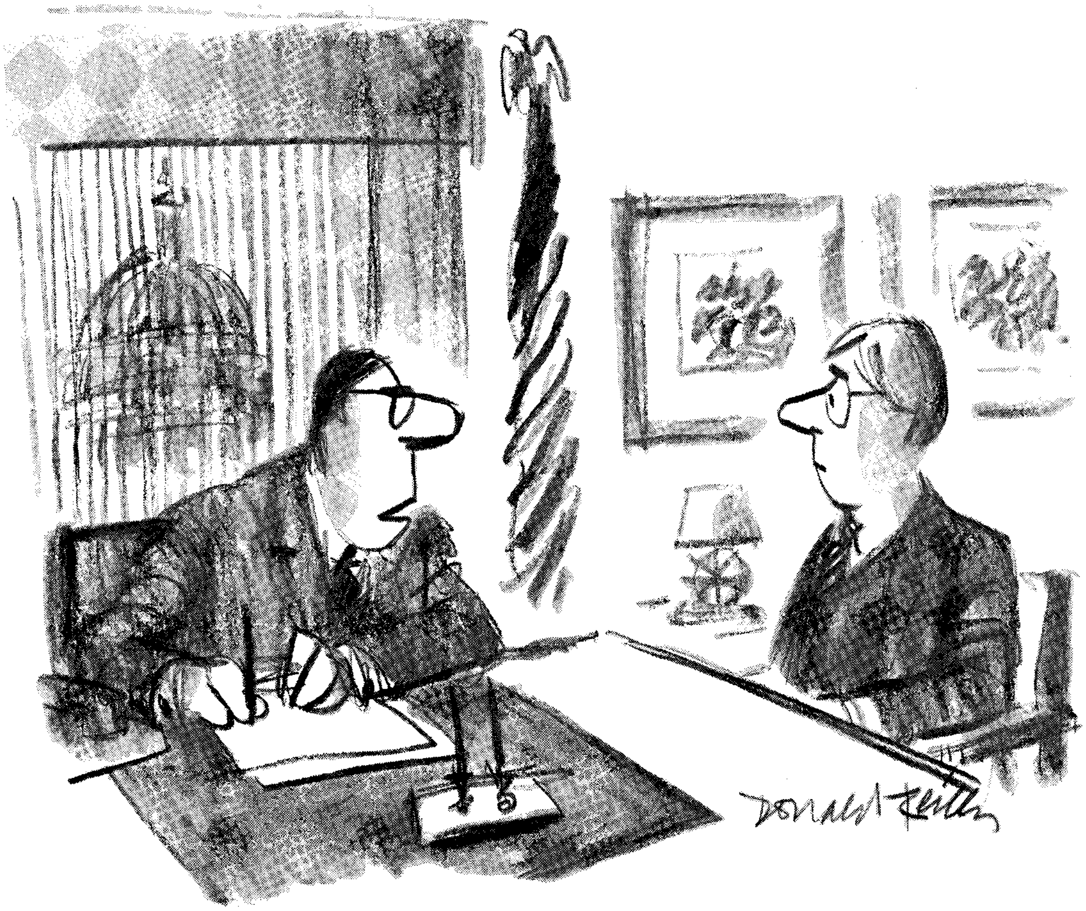


That year, Leda recorded an academic strikeout, the first of her life; no matter how hard she concentrated, her dissertation wouldn't go. Detachment had become a brick wall, dividing her from all the things she used to hold important, and even those she'd simply enjoyed. A casual affair with another graduate student, which they had pursued between term papers, quietly ended. Leda told herself without resentment, "He got busy." When the Vespasian job was offered casually, by a friend of a friend of the dean's, it struck her as uncommon luck—a chance to work.

Leda has to be working. It's in her nature (as it used to be in her father's), and now it's a refuge from blank time, from thinking about the past. With a sense of purpose, she finishes her drink and paces methodically through the few chores necessary for order in the trailer—shutting the foldout bed, a quick sweep, running a dustcloth over the shiny quartet of softball trophies left by the couple in Tucson. Then she



"One final question. As far as you know, have you any family history of loose-cannonism or whistle-blowing?"

uts the just collected et of final exams on er kitchen table, next o a fresh Campari-and-oda and the two neat tacks turned in by her ther classes. She has unil the nineteenth to turn n her final grades; then, peedily, the V.C.C. omputer will tabulate hem and mail them to he students before Christmas. Normally, Leda grades papers trictly in the order reeived, but Mr. Pucinki's claim—"I think we can guarantee a C"—lures her to break this rule. She shuffles through the last stack of papers for Karl's.

The assignment was to write persuasively, in favor of a cause or an idea whose time has come. The title of Karl's essay: "Androids Are America's Best Friends." Where in the world, wonders Leda, could he have got it? She reaches for a cigarette, and the act brings intimate recall of Karl. The young Jesus. In class, Karl put up his hand exactly once. Leda, waving a lit cigarette, was making a point about conjunctions when she noticed him. Surprised, yet smiling encouragement, she nodded toward Karl—sitting at arm's length from her in the front row—to go ahead.

"Would you put out your cigarette, please?" he asked. "I'm sensitive to smoke." He looked upward at a cardboard notice posted over the blackboard by the Vespasian Fire Department. "And you're not supposed to."

Leda couldn't stem a rising blush. Her voice went ahead evenly, reasonably, like the narrator's in an educational film: "We all have to make compromises. For instance, we're supposed to eat our lunches in the cafeteria, but I know you all have busy schedules and can't always make time for the cafeteria—way over in Module J, isn't it? So I let people eat here, in class."

"I don't eat," Karl said simply. It was true—he didn't so much as chew gum. In the first weeks of class the motherly students had pressed him to accept packets of Nabs and salted peanuts. His repeated "No, thank you"s were definitive, and the students had withdrawn. On this day, propelled by his simple reply to Leda, Karl's asceticism spread to the entire class. The usual undercurrent of noise—the little gasp of pop tops coming unhinged, candy wrappers rustling—suddenly grew still.

In the unnatural silence Leda longed to bark out an order: "Eat! Everyone back to lunch!" Instead, she ground out her cigarette.

The memory somewhat taints her current smoke. She takes a long drag anyway, hoping it will clear her mind of bias, and dives into "Androids." The essay isn't terrible, though it's not exactly graceful. The point, hammered at in every paragraph and delivered at the end as an ultimatum, is that American factories owe it to the country to lay on robot employees, after the Japanese example.

Leda supposes Karl culled the productivity statistics from copies of *Business Week* lying around his house. The numbers are set off by his unformed cursive, which balloons well over the margins—a sloppiness that always annoys her. But, frowning, she senses that the familiar look of the essay is deceptive. She rereads it, noting row upon row of complete sentences and appropriate uses of "there" and "their." Karl's grammar has never been so innocent of error: by the standards Leda applies to Introductory Composition, the essay merits a C, possibly a B. Again she hears the echo of Mr. Pucinski's claim, advanced in his real-estate-real-people voice.

She is immediately disgusted, then, fleetingly, elated. At last she has got something on the holy family. But her righteous thrill subsides when she realizes there's no proof. Compared with Karl's earlier assignments, "Androids" reads like part of a continuous *œuvre*—more lucid but undeniably similar. It's the work of a mature Karl. Leda envisions Mr. Pucinski at a desk typing, and Karl recopying the result in his erratic child's hand. But a vision isn't proof; it isn't sufficient to take to the dean and the Vespasian Student Affairs Committee, which rules on matters of cheating and plagiarism. For a moment she lets herself think hypothetically of the case of Leda Harrison v. Karl and Walter Pucinski: a schoolteacher, and a stranger to boot, pitted against little Karl and his father—a pillar of the community, though he only comes up to her shoulder. The jury wouldn't be out thirty seconds. Father and son would walk off scot-free.

I couldn't stand it, Leda thinks, and looks down at her hand clutching Karl's essay so tightly the edges are crumpling. She lets go of the essay and begins smoothing it with her fist. It occurs to her that there is a just way of measuring "Androids Are America's Best Friends"—on its merits, as the product of a successful businessman. By Federal Trade Commission standards, which Leda imagines are stringent, this is a shoddy item. She stops attempting to smooth out the crumples. She uncaps her red Expresso marker, and gives Mr. Pucinski a D.

Christmas Day in the trailer is long and silent. Leda sleeps as late as she's able, until 10 A.M., then watches Christmas specials on television and irons blouses, waiting for the call from Italy. At 10 P.M. it still hasn't come, and, calculating that the hour in Rome is impossibly late, Leda rouses herself for a walk. She puts on a sweater and jacket and her mittens, but then, instead of walking out the door and locking it, she sits down on the foldout bed in her heavy clothes, overtaken by fatigue. She can't lift a hand. After a long time, thoroughly uncomfortable, she undresses to the skin and goes to bed.

The next morning, a Thursday, her phone rings early, jerking Leda from sleep. She's sure it's her father; all the same, she pauses before answering. He has made her wait an entire day (she'll never believe the overseas lines were jammed every minute of Christmas); now let him wait. Not too long, though, since she's afraid he'll hang up.

"Hi." Leda's voice is bright and hard, wide awake.

"Merry Christmas. Hey, I'm glad you're up. For a second there I was feeling a little guilty, a *little* guilty. But it's not so awfully early in the morning, is it?"

"Merry Christmas. It's seven-thirty." Leda tries to take the starch out of her tone. Her caller is Allan Castor, chairman of the Vespasian English Department; she's surprised he gets up so early.

"Hope you had a good one." At Allan Castor's end the TV is on full blast, and he speaks loudly to be heard above it.

"It was fine," Leda says, edging the receiver away from her ear. "I hope yours was, too."

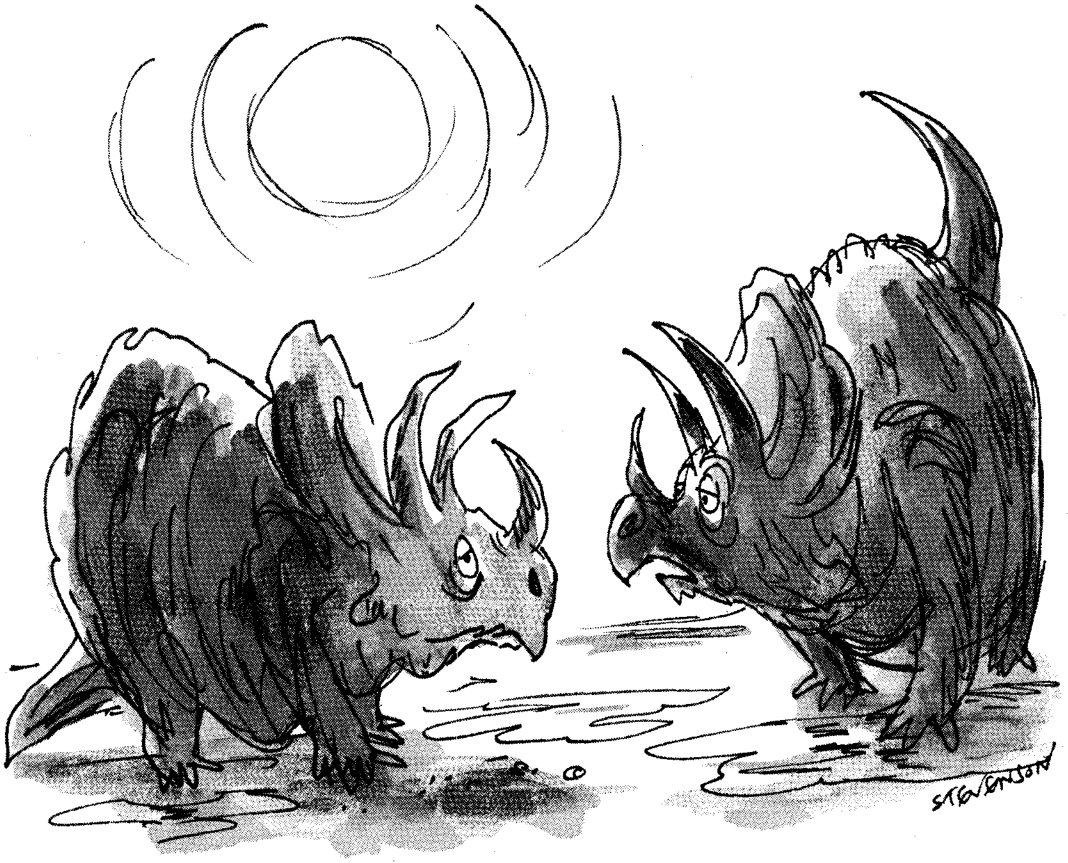
"Not half bad. Well, I'm sorry to bother you, but I thought you'd want to know that Walter Pucinski dropped by yesterday. Dropped by, that's a manner of speaking. The man stormed in, wouldn't take a seat. He asked me—in this senatorial voice, like we're both in Congress—if I would explain my hiring policies. Did I have to meet some kind of quota for incompetents?"

"I can't change the grade," Leda says. "It wouldn't be fair to pass Karl because of parental pressure. I'm sorry."

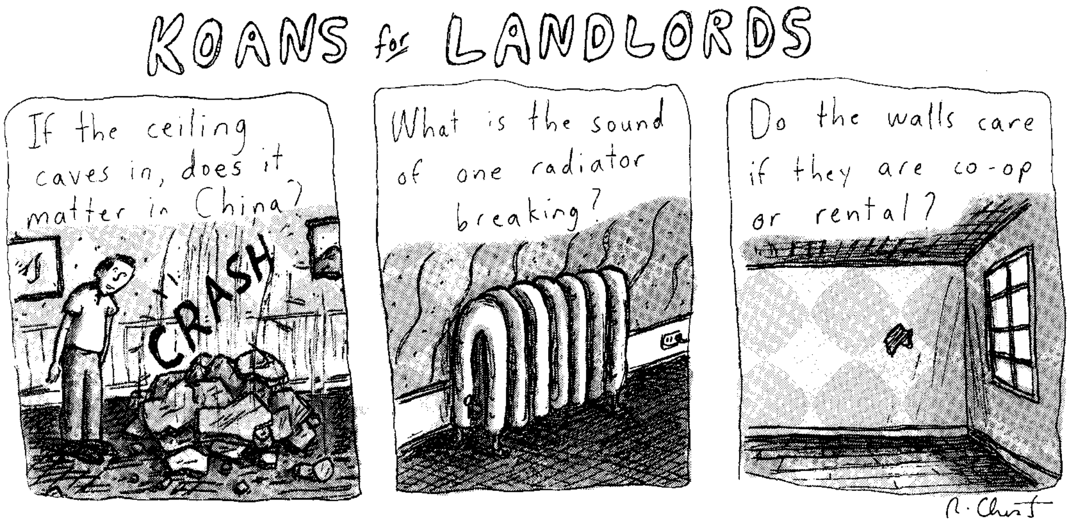
"I couldn't believe it. Neither could Harriet. I was so shocked I just stood there and took it. Later Harriet was furious that I didn't show him the door. You know Harriet." Leda listens quietly. At last Allan trails off, adding in afterthought, "Hey, don't change the grade. Why should you? We couldn't believe it."

Leda passes the day setting up a filing system for the new year—Correspondence, Financial, Miscellaneous—and watching more television, which makes her feel guilty. Before bed, she checks her college schedule for the opening date of spring semester and, assuming the worst case—that her father never calls—figures she has ten days of silence in store.

But Friday morning, at nine o'clock,



"I foresee an upturn within the next six to eight million years."


KOANS for LANDLORDS
If the ceiling caves in, does it matter in China?
CRASH
What is the sound of one radiator breaking?
Do the walls care if they are co-op or rental?
R. Chast

the dean calls to report that Mr. Pucinski has been in touch. He has requested a formal review of his son's grade. "Been in touch" and "requested" are the terms the dean uses, but he is a practiced mollifier. Leda asks if Mr. Pucinski made his request politely.

"Oh, yes, he was very reasonable and, I must say, convincing. He's strongly attached to Karl, wants the best for him. I'm not advising you to worry over the matter, of course." The dean has a bad head cold, and his voice is audibly hoarse, like an obscene caller's.

"Our best course is to keep tabs on the situation as it develops," says the dean, as if the issue were a world crisis, a bombing or international kidnapping. "We'll talk."

The second call of the day is a newspaper columnist from Lansing, with a bad connection.

"Look," he says, mystified and offended that his questions draw monosyllables. "I'm trying to get your side of the story."

Leda tells him there is no story. No, she's never been much good at math or science herself, but she doesn't envy—

"Pucinski claims you've been carrying a chip on your shoulder ever since Karl asked you—politely, Pucinski says—not to smoke in class."

"He claims that?"

"I know I wouldn't like a ten-year-old who ordered me around," the columnist says hopefully, leading her on.

She has been staring out the window throughout the conversation, but only now, all at once, does her view come cleanly into focus: the late-afternoon sun perched on the prongs of a distant line of trees, and, closer up, the Amish farm that faces Flatland Estates from opposite the access road. Four black buggies are drawn up before the farmhouse, a sign of company for dinner. The day is slipping away, and she hasn't been outside. In fact, she can't pinpoint the last time she left the trailer.

"Excuse me, I have to go now," Leda says. "I have to keep the line open," she improvises. "I'm expecting an overseas call."

After Leda eats dinner and the buggies have left, the phone rings again. An English professor from Michigan State apologizes gracefully for bothering her.

"Once upon a time," he explains, "I was Walter Pucinski's high-school English teacher." His voice has a slight self-conscious edge. She is positive that he's somehow in Mr. Pucinski's debt: for reduced terms on a piece of lakefront property, or favorable treatment from a zoning board.

"To be perfectly honest," the professor goes on, "Walter's interested in an outside opinion of your writing ability. I told him it wasn't pertinent, the point is not to teach by example. I mean, you're not a surgeon. But Walter was adamant."

"I'm not published." Leda is worn out, beyond mounting a defense. "And my dissertation is very rough."

"You have a master's thesis?"

"It's in another state."

"I understand." The professor waits, allowing her time. It dawns on her that there is no real point in not satisfying him, and suddenly she is promising to have her thesis mailed to M.S.U.

"Pronto," she adds. The unwavering surrender feels good.

"I thank you," the professor says. He apologizes again and wishes her a prosperous New Year.

SATURDAY morning it snows, the flakes falling thickly. Leda bundles up, walks into Vespasian, and settles in at the A & K Restaurant over coffee and the Lansing paper. She turns to the weather page with an idea of checking conditions in Rome, but there's no list, like the one in the New York *Times*, of temperatures abroad. Disappointed, she reads the rest of the paper scrupulously, story by story. *L'affaire Pucinski*, as the columnist had insisted on calling it over the phone, isn't mentioned. She's grateful for that much.

Noticing her empty cup, the waitress returns to ask if she'll be needing anything else. Leda, startled, takes this as a pointed suggestion to leave, forgetting that she's in Vespasian, where it's only courtesy. She rises slowly and, not looking forward to the trailer, dillydallies back. It's getting colder; the snow, having crusted the rows of dry cornstalks, has tailed off.

Once inside the trailer, she forces herself to take out the set of essays by Karl's class and begin rereading, word for word and this time in order. All the others are marked C or better—are they really any better than the one Karl turned in? Leda thinks she ought to make the comparison before the dean does. He'll probably impound every paper to see if she's grading fairly.

She reads three and has to stop. The essays are about gun control, abortion, and the merits of the all-volunteer Army, but she can't tell them apart. The style—direct attack, no subtlety—seems exactly the same, as does the Palmer Method handwriting. It's useless to read further, through twenty-five repeat performances, twenty-five versions of the same story.

She sifts through the stack for "Androids," knowing it will have an identical ring. When the dean reads it he will wonder about her objectivity. He won't guess—won't want to guess—

that Leda has been stringently fair, unless she names the real author. She realizes—it is a limp thought, rather than a sudden bolt—that she doesn't want to work so hard to be believed. She can't. Just this once, she wants to succumb. And, truly, she's beginning to doubt her first conviction. The authorship question no longer seems to have a hard-and-fast answer. For Mr. Pucinski to write that androids are his country's best friends is nearly tantamount to Karl's writing it; for Leda, the line between father and son is becoming fluid. A Pucinski is a Pucinski, and there is no measuring one without measuring the other. Leda acts quickly, before the thin logic of this wears off. When Karl's essay surfaces she crosses out the D and pencils in a C-plus. On second thought, she traces the new grade in red. There's nothing left to do but call the registrar with the change, and that will have to wait until Monday. In the meantime, she's tired again, almost lumpy with exhaustion.

For a second or two she thinks about alerting the dean, but decides that, too, can wait for Monday, and on the off chance the dean will call first she lifts the receiver from her phone. She sits still for a moment in the quiet trailer, feeling wonderfully disconnected from *l'affaire Pucinski*. Her father's call—but thinking of the promised call only throws Leda into an awful vacancy. It won't come, of course, with her phone off the hook, and she'll let him use that as his excuse when he needs it: her phone was off the hook.

SUNDAY morning she sleeps heavily and later than her custom, waking to a persistent banging at the door. It disorients her; noise in the morning recalls New York. In Vespasian, nothing has disturbed her sleep, until lately. Lately, her mornings have been like Grand Central Station. Leda smiles at the thought, which carries her into full consciousness. At the door, wrapping on her robe, she decides recklessly—it isn't New York, after all—to open up.

Mr. Pucinski is stamping his feet on the mat. His cheeks are red from cold and his eyes are beginning to run; he looks to Leda like a red-cheeked Russian doll. Inside him nests a smaller Mr. Pucinski, in suit and tie, ready to pop out.

"Are you all right?"

Leda considers. "No, I'm cold." She crosses her arms over the robe.

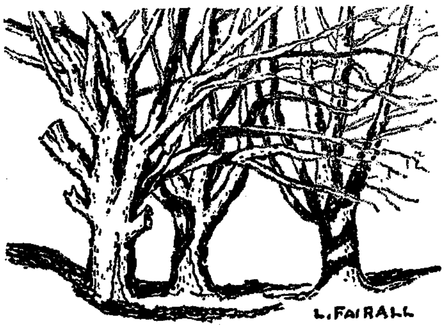
"I tried calling yesterday and had no answer, and this morning, just now, when you didn't come to the door—I was worried."

"Well, I'm all right," she says. She is getting colder, wondering what to do. Behind Mr. Pucinski is a Mercedes, parked in the space allotted to her, and beyond the car the sky stretches a dull, unbroken gray.

"Mrs. Pucinski and Karl are having a little visit with the grandparents," he says. "I'm just coming from church, and I hoped I might persuade you to step out for a bite of breakfast."

"Church," Leda repeats, as if it were a foreign word.

"You're sure nothing is wrong?" There's a hint of the concern he showed when he asked Leda about bicycling over ice. "May I come in?"



Why not? If she'd fought a battle, or even had a cause, it's over. She steps back into the trailer and tells Mr. Pucinski to drop his coat anywhere.

"I've already had breakfast," she says, ignoring his doubting glance at the bare countertop. "But I don't mind making coffee." She starts the complicated business of grinding beans, boiling water, folding the filter into perfect fours. Mr. Pucinski remains standing, looking around at the softball trophies and unmade foldout bed. Leda has a revelation that the box of a trailer is just the right size for him, a good fit.

"Do you like living alone?" he asks.

"In general, yes," she says, in crisp, classroom tones. If only she were dressed she'd feel in control.

"I imagine you've met a lot of people here. Borrowing sugar from the neighbors and what have you."

"I'm afraid I never eat sugar," she says, half in apology. Holding his coffee cup, Mr. Pucinski is scanning the kitchen for a sugar bowl. She wonders if by neighbors he means the Amish farmer. Then, realizing he has the other trailer-court residents in mind,

SPEED OF LIGHT

The radium in luminescent numbers
painted on my watch face fades—no time,
and no things in the closed-in cosmos now
but these: the massive plow looming ahead,
the soft churn of chains in snow, eccentric
scythings of his hazard lights like amber
helicopter blades above, the close
cones of headlamps pressed against the blizzard's
high wall. I've followed him for miles now,
watched the spume combing off his cutwater,
the great V-plow, speeding, sparks spurting
underneath its tempered edge and drifting
up the windscreen now in strange and unfamiliar
constellations, changing . . .
                                        A universe
in one dimension only, love, this road,
the black trace reeling off his rear wheels here
like new creation dragging off its spool—
this is the limiting velocity:
I thread this white cloud chamber as I can,
I etch this line across what curvature
of space and time still separates us now,
and night dilates, all night, all night the plow
grinds the stone roadbed like my heart
grinding through this last bad month alone
without you, in the dark or in the light.

—RICHARD KENNEY

• •

she adds, "This place never hit me as much of a neighborhood. People stay here a few months—then they lose their jobs and clear out in a hurry."

"It's a shame," Mr. Pucinski says. "Mobile homes are efficient, moderate-cost housing."

"Cheap, right. But how safe? We're living in tin cans. A tornado comes and *phffft*. Gone with the wind."

"I can't—" Mr. Pucinski stops himself. "To tell the truth, I have a soft spot for your neighborhood. It's the first piece of property I helped to develop. You'll never guess what used to be here."

Leda shakes her head; she can't guess.

"The old county fairgrounds. We're pretty close to the site of the home-ec tent."

She stares, thinking how strange he is. He's from another planet. "Blue-ribbon pies," she says, falling in with him; he invites it. "Green-tomato preserves, rhubarb jam." Mr. Pucinski nods. "To tell *you* the truth," she says abruptly, "I didn't have any breakfast. I may take you up on your invitation, if you'll give me five minutes."

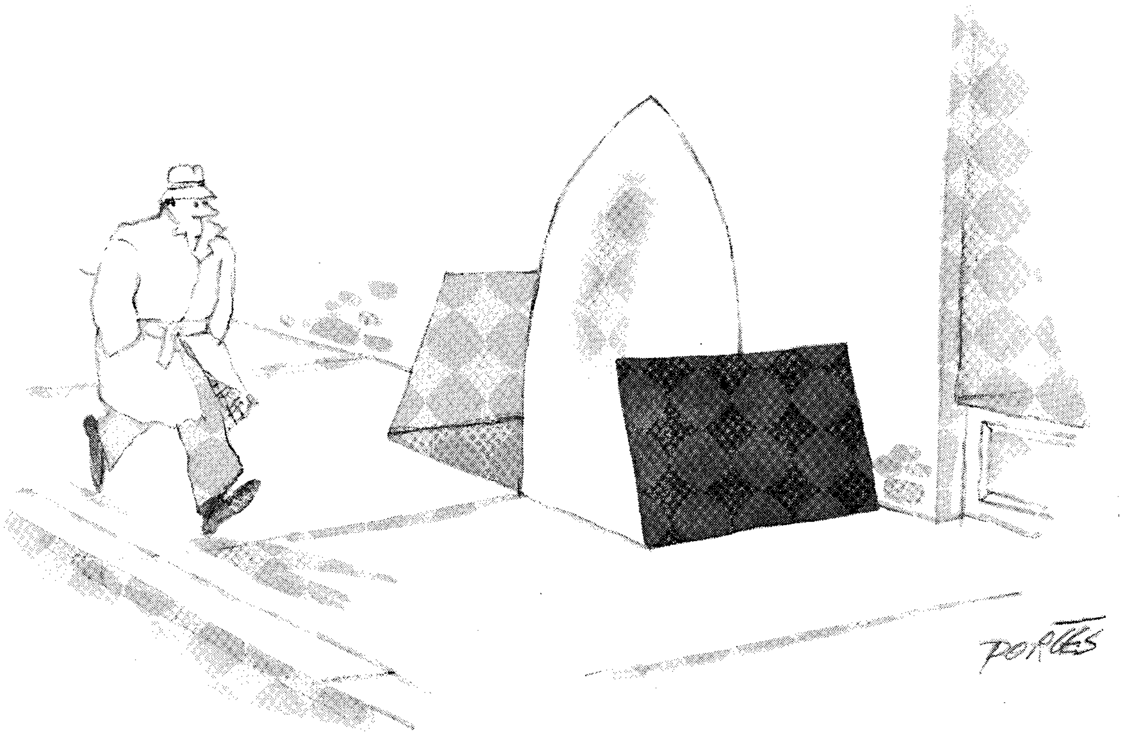
He tells her to take all the time she needs—he'll be waiting in the car.

It's too late to buy breakfast. They eat Sunday dinner instead, at a barn-like smorgasbord place. Leda's recent meals have been haphazard, and a look at the long buffet—worthy of a place in the home-ec tent—makes her ravenous. She loads two plates with chicken, ribs, cottage fries, squash, beets, wax beans, Swedish limpa, pickled herring. Mr. Pucinski lets her eat in peace.

After dinner, as they're getting into the Mercedes, he asks her if she'd like to go for a drive. Leda halts in the midst of locking her door and buckling the seat belt; she is half drunk with food.

"Without a car," he points out mildly, "you can't have toured any of the pretty country outside Vespasian."

Leda agrees; she doesn't know the territory. Then she says, after a pause, "Why not? A little sightseeing."



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Sooner or later, she expects him to put the pressure on about Karl, and then she'll admit in good grace that he and Karl have won. But she is comfortable waiting for the pressure. She almost regrets that things are settled; a spell of enormous meals and concern for her welfare would have been very agreeable. Mr. Pucinski's attentions are manipulative—she must remember that—but all the same they aren't so bad. *He's* not so bad.

They cruise slowly through a subdivision that Mr. Pucinski is building on some land bordering the college. Every street winds and is a Circle, Crescent, or Court. There are a few finished houses—Colonials with basketball hoops poking over the garage doors—and many more skeletons: half-built frames under shredding plastic.

"We have sewer lines for two hundred families," Mr. Pucinski says. "Five miles from Route 86, close to schools, a teen clubhouse under construction."

Leda isn't sure how to respond. She senses she is looking at failure, yet Mr. Pucinski lists his selling points confidently, even reverently. More and more, he's shrinking in her eyes.

"Just wait until the interest rates drop another couple of points," he is saying. "We're in business." He turns into the road Leda takes home from school. Passing the playground-equipment factory, he lifts his foot from the gas.

"You own part of this?" Leda asks, reacting to the cue.

"No, but I facilitated it. I heard the factory people were planning to come, and I formed the investment group that bought the land from the farmer and resold it. We did very well." Accelerating, he says earnestly, "We provided a lot of jobs."

The Mercedes glides by her turnoff. "I don't want to keep you," Mr. Pucinski says, "but you must take a spin out to the lake—it's so nearby. You can't live here and never see the lake."

"I rode my bike out once," Leda admits. "I'm sure I missed a lot, though. It's very pretty."

"It used to be nothing." He explains how the big lake was once a set of small ones, joined by an underground stream feeding into the Vespasian River. He and his partners had them dredged into one, and are selling lots for summer homes. "We're looking for retirement-minded folks, too. To give stability."

They pull off the county road onto a narrow stretch of blacktop. Leda looks out her window and thinks this is an incongruous setting for a resort, planted amid acres of farms. An Amishman, wearing black from head to heel and a full, undisciplined beard, stops between his house and barn to give back her stare.

"There's something that attracts people," Mr. Pucinski says, nodding to him. "Our sense of tradition."

After half a mile the blacktop merges with a rutted dirt road. On either side, at regular intervals, bright orange two-by-fours emerge like lights from the snow; Leda recognizes them as lot markers. Mr. Pucinski stops the Mercedes in a turnaround about a hundred yards from the water, close enough for her to see the cattails and frozen reeds fringing the shore. The lake is clouded with ice. On the far shore there is a scattering of A-frames, one of the larger models lit up. As far as she can make out, there are no houses at all on this side—only elm trees, young maples that are bare sticks, and the glowing lot markers. She is about to comment sympathetically, "Interest rates," but Mr. Pucinski speaks first.

"This property we're on is mine," he announces. "I combined three lots, all with lakefront footage."

"You have a beautiful view," Leda says.

"You like it?" Mr. Pucinski has left the car running but set the emergency brake. His hands are off the wheel.

"Oh yes, I like it." She feels that Walter Pucinski has been studying her all day and now wills her to do something. She's at a loss. "It's a terrific view," she says. "Very striking. I guess you'll be putting up your own house as soon as you can."

She has a feeling in her left hand as though her mitten had tightened around it, and looks down. She is surprised—Mr. Pucinski hasn't impressed her as a man who would try seduction for practical aims. Maybe there's something else. She can't be sure; at present, she can only gaze at the hands—Mr. Pucinski's clasping her woollen one—and think that they hardly resemble human parts.

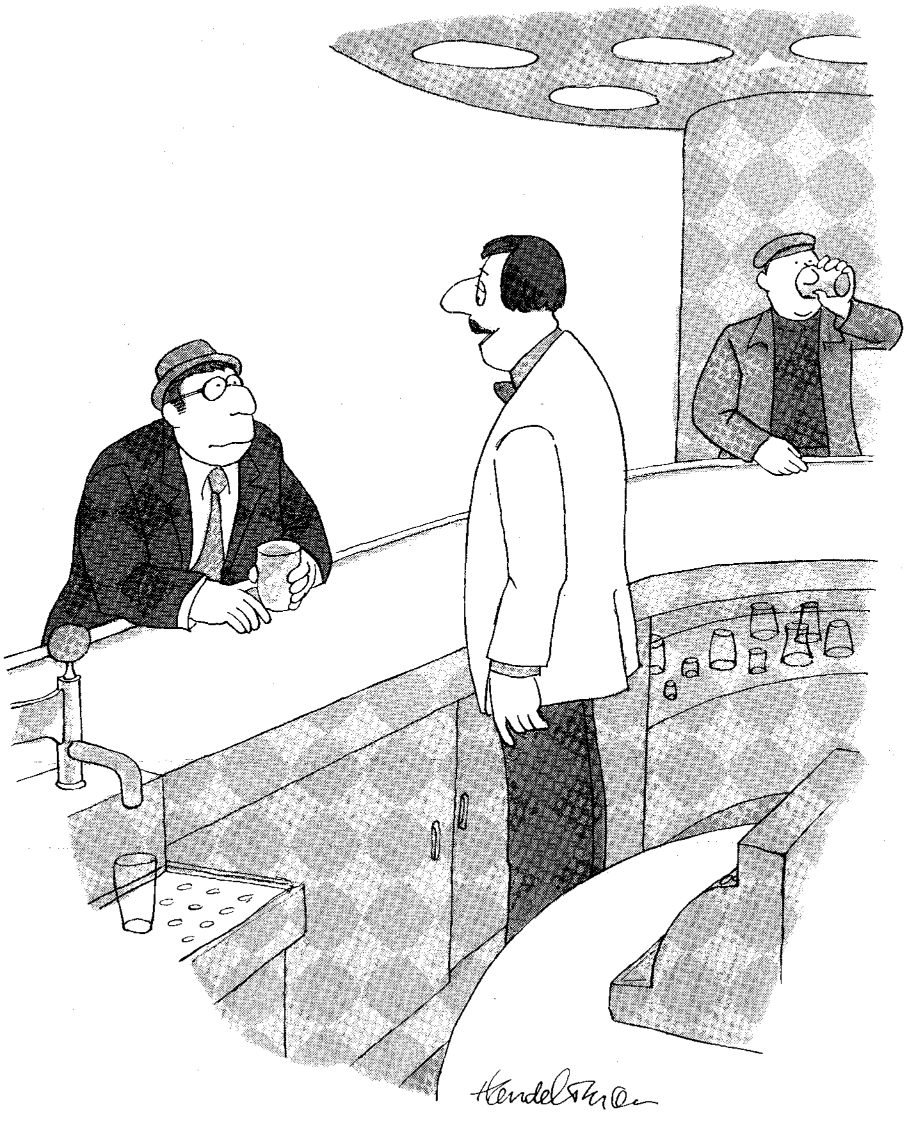
With his free hand he clicks a knob on the dash and the Mercedes fills with the sound of many voices. Leda doesn't recognize the song but listens hard, hearing familiar qualities. In the instant that Mr. Pucinski darts his hand to her knee, she begins to laugh. Her *knee*, of all places. How out of date. The voices belong to the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. Her father used to play their records constantly, until he divorced and met his young girlfriend.

"*Sic transit* Mormon Tabernacle," she explains to Mr. Pucinski, when she has sobered enough to speak. He doesn't let go of her knee or turn down the music. He won't even answer; it's as if he were proceeding by blueprint.

"Listen," Leda starts off firmly, marshalling herself. "You don't have to go through with this, there's absolutely no reason. Karl—" She means to say that Karl has earned a C in her book and she wishes him all the best, but instead she halts for air, fills her lungs, and announces, "Karl isn't worth it."

Mr. Pucinski releases her knee. Leda seizes at freedom without examining his face or troubling to absorb the angry words coming from his mouth. She undoes her seat belt and steps out of the Mercedes, shutting the door on the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. For a moment she stands in the road, adjusting to the chill, then sets off at a run through Mr. Pucinski's lakefront lots, all the way down to the water's edge. Her back to the car, she looks across the lake and waits; after a while the noise of the engine no longer carries through the still air. She continues to survey the A-frames on the opposite shore, letting out her breath and sucking air in, in big mouthfuls. Her feet are soaking and going numb, but for another minute at least—the space in which it seems she really has won a round—Leda is happy.

—Polly Morrice



"Yes indeed, sir. You strike me as a man who is quite definitely in touch with himself."

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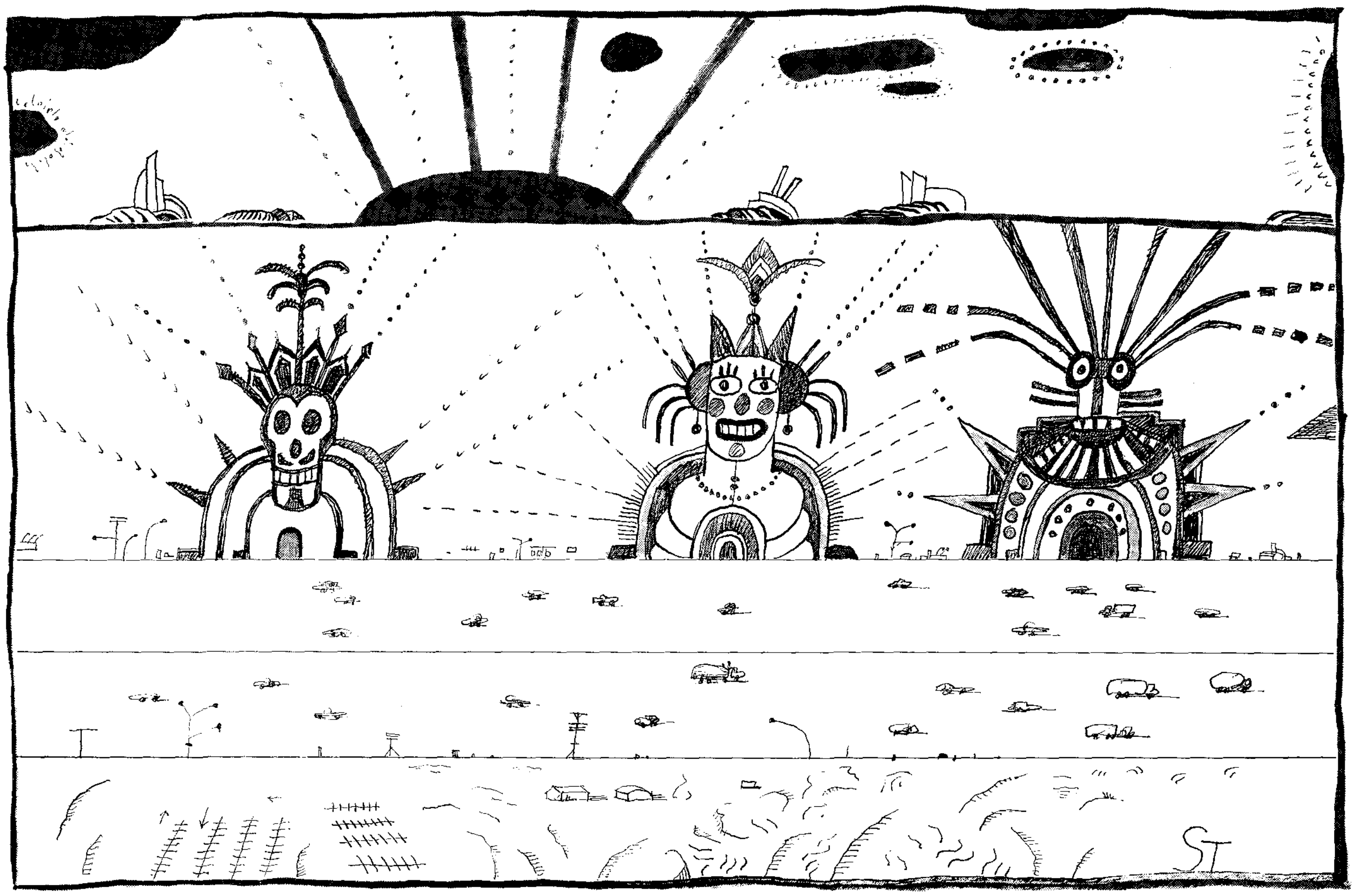
LETTERS WE NEVER FINISHED READING

Montgomery County Republican
Central Committee
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Dear Republican Friend,
You don't deserve this letter.

A REPORTER AT LARGE

THE BIGGEST GAME IN TOWN—I



NINE o'clock on a Tuesday morning at the end of April, 1981, and according to the giant illuminated figures at the top of the Mint Hotel the temperature was already ninety-two degrees. At the entrance of Binion's Horseshoe Casino stood the famous horseshoe itself, seven feet high, painted gold, and enclosing within its arch a million dollars in ten-thousand-dollar bills. The hundred bills are neatly ranked and held, for whatever foreseeable eternity, in some kind of plastic, bulletproof, fireproof, bombproof—the perennial dream of the Las Vegas punter visible to all, although not quite touchable. If you come too close, one of Binion's giant security guards, leather straps polished and creaking over his beige uniform, gun in his holster, moves quietly forward.

The million-dollar horseshoe reflected the glare of the morning sun on Fremont Street. Behind it were gloom and movement: a long, low, rather shabby room, full of noise and smoke, and, unlike the other casinos at this early hour, full of people. Women in halters and men in cowboy boots and Stetsons jostled each other around the roulette and craps tables, rattled the armies of slot machines, and perched in semicircles before the blackjack dealers; even the seats in the little keno lounge were mostly taken. At the back, there was already a crowd along the rail that separates the casual punters from the area that, for about four weeks every year, is set aside for poker. Fixed to one wall of this makeshift poker room was a large yellow banner, announcing in red, "Binion's Horseshoe Presents the World Series of Poker 1981." Opposite was an equally large blackboard, listing across the top the side games being played that day while the official tournament was in progress: "Hold 'Em, No Limit—5, 10, 25;" "Hold 'Em, No Limit—25, 25, 50;" "7 Stud—50, 100;" "7 Stud—200, 400." Under each set of figures was a column of names and initials. The larger the numbers, the shorter the column beneath.

The game just inside the rail seemed to have been going on all night. The players were gray-faced and unshaven. They shifted about uncomfortably in their seats, yawned, scratched vaguely at their grubby shirts, lit one cigarette from the stub of another. They looked, most of them, like the uneasy sleepers on the benches in railway stations, sitting there because they could not raise the price of a hotel room. Only the dealer seemed dressed for the occasion: he wore a gleaming white shirt and a narrow black bow tie with two long tails, Western style, inscribed with the word "Horseshoe." He checked the bets in front of the three players who remained in the pot, and raked those chips into the pile of chips at the center of the table; then he discarded the top card of the deck he held, and turned over a communal card, to join four already exposed in front of him. A cowboy to his left tapped twice on the table with his forefinger. To the cowboy's left, an elderly man in a bulging T-shirt stared meditatively at the exposed cards, took two black chips from the stack in front of him, and tossed them toward the center. He seemed utterly uninterested, as if the matter were somehow beneath his attention. "Two dollars," said the dealer, in a bored voice. The next player, a nervous young man with a Zapata mustache, cupped his hands around two cards face down in front of him, squeezed up their corners, and flicked them toward the dealer, elegantly, like a fop making a conversational point. Only the cowboy was left. He tilted his Stetson back an inch and stared at the elderly man, unblinking, for a full minute. While he stared, he juggled a pile of black chips up and down on the baize in front of him—up and down, in and out, like a yo-yo on a string. His fingers were agile and surprisingly long. Then his hand stopped abruptly, he lifted seven chips off the pile without seeming to count them, and pushed them into the center. "Raise it up a nickel," he said. The fat elderly man crossed his arms on his chest, sank his chin toward them, and considered the cowboy. There was a long pause. In the same bored voice, the dealer said, "Five dollars to you."

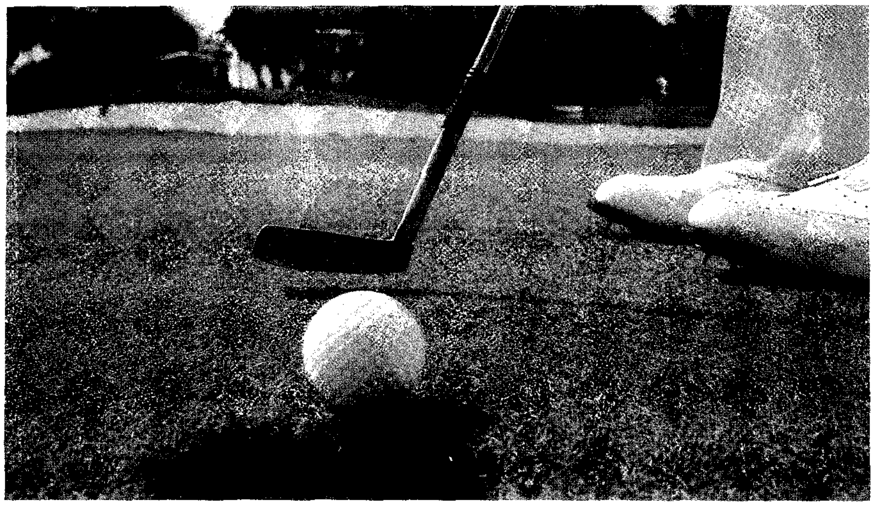
A nickel? Five dollars? This was my first morning in Las Vegas, so I leaned forward to see the markings on the black chips. In the middle of each was a white disc decorated with the casino's symbol, around which was printed "Horseshoe Club, Las Vegas, Nev." Inside the horseshoe was a portrait of the owner, Benny Binion, in a cowboy hat, smiling encouragingly over his signature. Below that was the figure "$100." So now I knew. Later, I was told that serious gamblers always leave off the zeros when they announce bets. Perhaps it is a way of showing their indifference. The bigger the bet, the more zeros omitted. In gambling parlance, a nickel is five hundred dollars, a dime is a thousand, a big dime is ten thousand. "It makes it simpler," I was told. It also makes it more unreal.

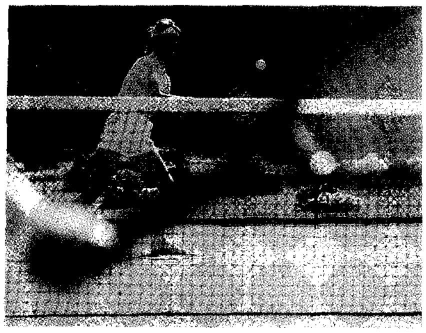
"Well, what do you say to a person who tells you he's working on a doughnut-shaped energy field?"

Unreal. Over in the back corner of the enclosure, as far from the spectators as they could decently manage, another group of men was settling down to a new game. Their clothes were pressed, their hair was brushed, and they moved in an aura of after-shave and talcum powder. I recognized some of the faces from newspaper photographs and from pictures in Doyle Brunson's book "Super/System," a large treatise on advanced poker techniques, strictly for postgraduates. I had studied the book like a Biblical scholar before I left my home in London, but now I found, to my irritation, that I could remember the faces more vividly than I could remember the advice and the card analysis. Brunson himself was at the table, and Bobby Baldwin and Puggy Pearson, all of them winners, in their turn, of the World Series Poker Championship, and there were four others, whose faces I vaguely recognized but whose names I could not place. The big league was settling down to a morning's entertainment. The men chatted while they nonchalantly unloaded their racks of chips and arranged them at their places at the table: massed towers of black, a couple of towers of gray five-hundred-dollar chips, and then, as an afterthought, a lower bastion of green twenty-five-dollar chips. Each player seemed to have his own architectural plan in mind, but the final effect was of so many grim desert fortresses. Then they fumbled around in their trouser pockets and pulled out packets of money, which they set between the chips and the raised leather edge of the table, like the garrison that the fortifications were protecting. The packets were of hundred-dollar bills, as freshly laundered as the players, and each belted with a paper band on which was printed "5000 Dollars." It was a quarter past nine on a weekday morning, and the boys were settling down for a quiet game of cards.

Welcome to Dreamland.

BUT England at the end of that April seemed no more real. That was the coldest spring of the century. Gales hammered the coastline, and the hills were drifted over by snow deep enough to kill newly dropped lambs by the thousand. The day before I left, a party of teen-agers had died of exposure on Dartmoor, and the roads





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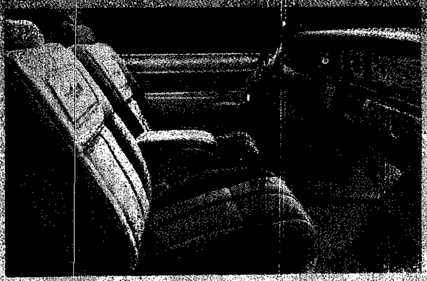

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[illegible]

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in the gentle Southwest were impassable. In normal years, England has no weather to speak of: soggy winters, chilly summers, a dank and penitential mediocrity, with remissions for good behavior. But that year even the climate seemed to be conspiring to demoralize the place: recession, inflation, mass unemployment, strikes, riots, and now blizzards. The mild nation of gardeners and dog lovers seemed to have faded into some remote historical past, along with "Aprille with his shoures soote."

Since there were stoppages, as usual, at all the airports, I called Gatwick to inquire about my flight. It took me an hour to get through. In a toneless and official voice, the operator said, "Passengers are requested to check in two hours before departure time."

"Why two hours?"

There was a pause. Then she gave up. "Because it's such a bloody mess here." She was still giggling when she hung up.

The chaos had subsided by late afternoon, and the airport was peaceful, but we waited half an hour for clearance out on the tarmac, the engines whistling into the icy Sussex hedgerows. Later, in the breaks between clouds, England was like Scandinavia—snow wherever you looked. But by then another reality had begun. It was Western Airlines' second direct flight from London to Las Vegas, and everyone was enthusiastic, eager to please, vaguely celebratory. British chill dissolved in the taste of bourbon and the broad, lazy accents of the stewardesses as we flew westward through the endlessly prolonged twilight.

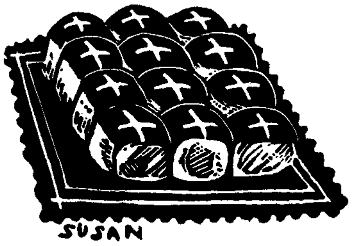
We cleared customs at Denver, and after that the huge plane was almost empty. So was McCarran International Airport when we landed, soon after midnight. So was the town itself, since this was a Tuesday morning and the weekend rush was over. I shared a taxi with an English lawyer who was in town for a week to make a deal. It was his first visit, he told me, and he added glumly, "I don't really gamble, but I suppose I will."

Downtown, where Binion's Horseshoe, the Golden Nugget, the Fremont, and the Four Queens face one another at the intersection of Fremont Street and Casino Center, the blaze of lights was like a steel furnace. The lawyer winced, and said, "We haven't got anything like this in London." But he, too, seemed to have been softened by the friendliness of the airline and a night temperature hotter than the hottest English summer's day; the tone of his voice was puzzled, awestruck, but not at all disapproving.

"Ain't nothing like it anywhere," said the bearded cabdriver.

"Ain't nothing like it anywhere." Not yet. Perhaps the moon will be like Vegas when the mining colonies are set up, blazing under their transparent domes. Instead of a giant bell jar, Vegas has air-conditioning. Giant steam generators pump out the millions of kilowatts without which the whole enterprise would collapse, eroded by the intolerable heat, and be handed back to the Paiute Indians, the leathery prospectors, and the Mormons, who were the first white men to settle here. But now the air-conditioning and the desert work together to keep the gambling economy running: at high noon, it is too hot for golf or tennis, or even swimming; the casinos are the only alternative. Perhaps the whole of the new Sun Belt culture thrives in the same way: its population, shuttling in air-conditioned cars between air-conditioned homes and air-conditioned offices and factories, is kept artificially cool, artificially vigorous in the teeth of a debilitating nature—a culture of the future, defined by technology and dependent on it.

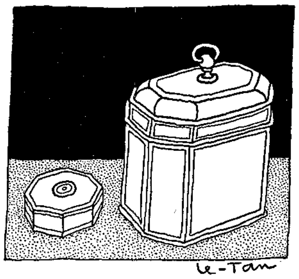
Las Vegas is the logical conclusion of what is for the foreigner one of the eeriest aspects of America: the utter lack of continuity between the large towns and their surrounding countryside. They used to say you could walk across London on the grass, and though that was not strictly true, it was not altogether crazy. The greenness of the European countryside penetrates the cities, and the influence of the cities spreads outward, beyond the suburbs—in a continual to-and-fro seepage—domesticating and subduing the landscape. From Stockholm to the Mediterranean, there seems to be nowhere that someone has not set foot before you.



In America, this subtle connection scarcely exists. Big cities like New York and Chicago are their own man-made landscapes, endless and self-contained, so that, walking their streets, you find it impossible even to imagine another way of life. Yet within an hour, across the Hudson and off the turnpike, there are deer and skunk in the woods, giving you a sense not of countryside but of the original wilderness. In Denver years ago, before it began to boom, I turned a corner in the honky-tonk downtown and saw the Rockies framed at the end of a long perspective of neon signs, and thought I was hallucinating. It was like peering up Broadway from Times Square and seeing Everest. American cities look inward at themselves, as if the land beyond them were too inhospitable to be contemplated.

The farther west you travel, the greater the sense of wilderness and inhospitality. The tawny deserts of New Mexico and Arizona, quivering in the heat and lunar blue at the horizon, are heartbreakingly beautiful and also heartbreakingly indifferent to the efforts of those who try to make a life in them, despite them. J. B. Priestley once remarked that in the Southwest you are more aware of geology than of history. The land is too big, too old, too parched, too obdurate; the only alternative to submission is defiance, like Brigham Young's institutional Gothic in Salt Lake City, rising like St. Pancras Station from the sandstone and bitter salt flats of Utah.

It was Brigham Young who sent the first white settlers to Las Vegas, in 1855. But the outpost was abandoned two years later, and it was almost a hundred years before the town had its own wild, science-fiction version of institutional Gothic. Las Vegas was officially founded on May 15, 1905, at a land auction by the San Pedro, Los Angeles & Salt Lake Railroad Company, but it began to flourish only after the state of Nevada legalized gambling, in 1931. At first, there was just a handful of shabby gaming saloons at what is now the downtown crossroads. For genuine action and glitter, well-heeled gamblers went to Reno, which, as a ranch town, had a certain substance and identity apart from gambling. But early in the thirties the federal government started to build the Hoover Dam, and Las Vegas was the nearest place of any size where the construction workers at Boulder City could gamble their money away. What Boulder City began, Los Angeles, less than six hours' drive across the blinding Mojave Desert, continued. As is proper for a gambling town, Las Vegas got lucky—geographically lucky. Its permanent population is now well over half a million and rising.



In its present form, the town, like Andrew Marvell's love, was "begotten by despair upon impossibility." To be precise, it was begotten by an East Coast hit man turned warlord upon the alkali-and-mesquite wastes beyond the city limits. In 1937, Benjamin Siegel—known commonly, though never to his face, as Bugsy—left New Jersey for Hollywood with the vague idea of becoming an actor (he was a friend of George Raft) and also with a syndicate commission to lean on the studios and set up the mob's own racing wire to the West Coast. He did not become an actor, but he did organize the wire, and in the process visited Las Vegas often: came, saw, and worked out the odds. What he saw was the opportunity for a giant casino outside town on the Los Angeles road, to catch the tourists on their way in. So in 1945 he built the Flamingo—huge, plush, and festooned from top to bottom with lights, as though defying anyone to pass it by. He thought of it as a monument to himself, and he was right, although not quite in the way he intended. In its first couple of months, the Flamingo defied all the known odds of gambling and lost money consistently. An unlucky streak, Siegel complained, but his backers were not amused. They were even less amused by his refusal to surrender the West Coast racing wire he had developed. On June 20, 1947, Bugsy Siegel was shot to death in Beverly Hills, at 810 North Linden Drive—the house he had rented for his mistress, Virginia Hill. Three days before, Miss Hill herself had conveniently left for a holiday in France. In Las Vegas, Siegel's memory is still revered. The Flamingo was a kind of Rubik's Cube of the postwar years—the big bright idea that others could profit from. Casino followed casino, and the road west out of town became the Strip. It now stretches for four miles into the Clark County desert, palace after palace, outlandish gesture after outlandish gesture.

The casinos lie out there on the baked earth like extravagant toys discarded on a beach, their signs looping, beckoning, spiralling, and fizzing recklessly, as in that moment of glory just before the batteries run down. But what the signs are signalling so urgently are invitations less to luck than to fantasy. The Strip is a neon playground for the middle-aged, its hotels conceived not just as places to stay but as Hollywood sets, each built round an idea, each offering its guests the chance to star in the movie of their choice. Those who have secretly hankered after "Ben Hur" go to Caesars Palace, where they can lounge on Cleopatra's Barge (with a view of the slot machines) while their drinks are served by girls dressed as Roman slaves. At the Aladdin, it's "Arabian Nights," at the Dunes and the Sahara discreet versions of "The Desert Song," and at Circus Circus it's "Trapeze," with aerialists flying about above your head and a gallery of battering carnival games to bemuse the children. Each is a world in itself, staffed by upward of three thousand people, with its own swimming pool, gymnasium, and arcade of expensive shops; many of the hotels have tennis courts or golf courses, and most of them offer elaborate supper shows, with famous stars and full supporting casts, more lavish and expensively staged than Broadway musicals. Together, they constitute a kind of movieland version of the Borscht Belt, with gambling as an added element of fantasy and release. They also offer anyone with even a modest bankroll an appearance of the opulence, luxury, and obsequious service that are elsewhere reserved for the very rich. For the few days his money lasts, the Las Vegas tourist can in every possible way feel like a film star.

The typical guest at a Strip hotel is middle-aged and middle class—over a quarter of the guests are college graduates, a fifth are self-employed—and that is how the casinos want it. They are more interested in turnover than in the really high rollers. This is why they have failed to attract the oil-rich Arabs who fuel the gambling economy of Europe. The Arabs, I was told, find Las Vegas rules too restrictive. If they bet the table limit on a single number at roulette, they are not allowed to double that bet on a split number, or treble or quadruple it on a three-way or four-way chance, as they can in London. The conglomerates that now own most of the casinos do not want million-dollar winners, or even million-dollar losers. They want steadier, more moderate customers—those who will win or lose tens of thousands of dollars at most. Which is, of course, more than enough to wipe out the majority of us. But they order these things differently in the world of really big-time gambling, and Las Vegas has lost out as a result. Its casinos turn over several billion dollars a year, but democratically, from twelve million weekenders, conventioneers, and passing tourists and some sixty thousand couples served annually by the town's second industry—quick marriages.

There are two exceptions to this rule, and they converge every year in the late spring. Las Vegas has the highest, hardest poker games in the world, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, fifty-two weeks a year. It also has Binion's Horseshoe—the one casino where none of the usual limit rules apply. The gambler at the Horseshoe is allowed to set his own limit with his first bet. In 1980, for example, someone drove in off the desert carrying two suitcases, one empty, the other containing seven hundred and seventy-seven thousand dollars in hundred-dollar bills. He took the suitcases to the cage at the back of the casino and changed the neat packets of money into chips, and then, escorted by security guards, he carried his racked chips to a craps table, bet the lot on a single throw of the dice, won, returned to the cage with his double load of chips, filled both his suitcases with money, and drove away. His only comment was "I reckoned inflation was going to eat that money up anyway, so I might as well double it or lose it all." He has not been back.

It could have happened nowhere in Las Vegas except at Binion's. The big casinos on the Strip, despite their apparent opulence and glamour, would not even have considered a bet of that size, because most of the men who run them are merely employees of business organizations with their offices elsewhere. The Horseshoe, however, is a family concern, which was founded by Benny Binion and is run by him and his two sons, Jack and Teddy. One or another of them is always there when a decision has to be made. Jack Binion, a fit-looking man in his forties, with not much hair and with a seemingly innocent country face—round eyes, large mouth, snub nose, ears like jug handles—speaks of their no-limit policy rather formally, as though it were a question of business philosophy: "One of the problems of American commerce today is that corporations have ceased to be product-oriented

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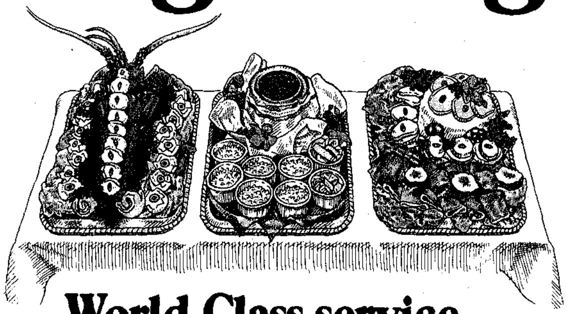

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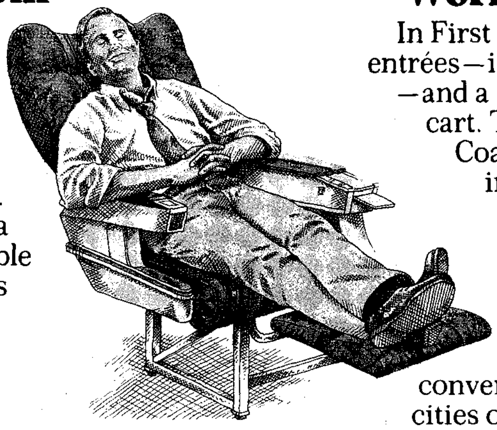

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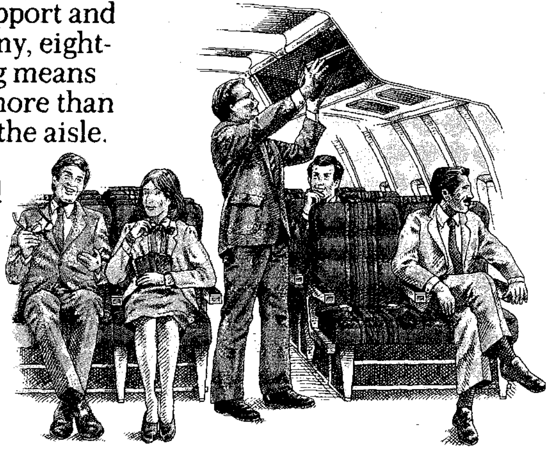

SEATTLE

Flight	Equip.	Day	Leave	Arrive
To Tokyo:[1]				
143	747	Daily (ex. Tues.)	12:55 p.m.	2:45 p.m.*
From Tokyo:[1]				
150	747	Daily (ex. Tues.)	7:00 p.m.	11:35 p.m.**
To Hong Kong:[2]				
17	DC-10	Daily	1:20 p.m.	6:15 p.m.*
From Hong Kong:[2]				
18	DC-10	Daily	1:45 p.m.	11:00 a.m.**

PORTLAND

Flight	Equip.	Day	Leave	Arrive
To Tokyo:[1]				
141	747	Tues.	1:00 p.m.	3:00 p.m.*
From Tokyo:[1]				
148	747	Tues.	7:00 p.m.	11:55 a.m.**

[1] Schedule eff. 4/24/83 to 10/30/83. Ask your Travel Agent or United about schedule prior to April 24.

[2] Schedule eff. Spring 1983.

*Arrive next day. **Arrive same day.

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"Jennifer's analysis of 'The Wind in the Willows' is very powerful."

and have become financial institutions. Because of mergers and inflation, the financial men have taken over the country and the corporations. Business structures have changed, because that's where the profit is. I would guess that eighty per cent of the top five hundred corporations are run by investment-banker types who have come in from the financial side instead of working their way up through the ranks. Very few production men are heads of corporations today. But I think the atmosphere is changing, and in ten years the line men will be back in charge."

But perhaps this is no more than an elaborate way of rationalizing a personal taste and a personal style, since the Binions themselves are gamblers and the high rollers who come to the Horseshoe are mostly their friends. The Binions have played cards with them, or golf or tennis; they have even staked some of them when they were broke. "In the gambling world, your social life and your business life become so interrelated that they are one and the same," Jack Binion said to me one day. The gamblers themselves put it more strongly. "For the serious player, the Binions *are* gambling in Vegas," I was told. The professional poker players I spoke to were unanimous only in their attitude toward the Binion family: not just admiration but —an even rarer feeling in that edgy and exclusive world—affection. That attitude permeates the casino itself—shabby, ill-lit, and crowded at all hours. "We're small," said Jack Binion. "Therefore, everyone is jammed together. But people are having a good time, and that gives the place an atmosphere of its own. We've been here a long time, and I like to think of us as a gamblers' gambling house. Not that the other places are just catering to tourists, but the guy who comes here is the sophisticated player. We're like a discount house: no frills, a kind of self-service, but you get the best deals."

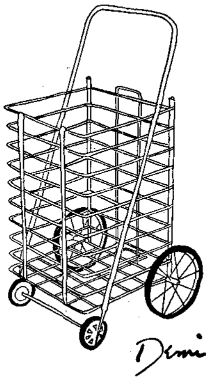
That down-home, family atmosphere would not be possible among the grisly Hollywood-style palaces of the Strip, nor would it be appropriate. The Horseshoe belongs to downtown Las Vegas, a geographically separate entity, otherwise known as Glitter Gulch—eight dollars by taxi from Caesars or twenty minutes by bus—to which the punters are ferried in from Los Angeles by the coachload, like migrant workers to the California fruit farms, and where the hotels have no tennis courts or golf courses or gymnasiums, and when I was there only a couple of them had swimming pools (smaller than average back-yard pools in suburban Phoenix) tucked away on their roofs. Downtown Las Vegas is strictly for gambling: there is nothing else to do, nowhere else to go. Fremont Street is lined with shops peddling cheap clothes and hideous souvenirs and zircon rings and pornography. In an area of about four blocks, there are more pawnshops than in the whole of Greater London. But I discovered only one drugstore, one five-and-ten, and nowhere at all to buy groceries or fruit. Ordinary shops are banished, like ordinary life, to the shopping centers and the suburbs.

Glitter Gulch is for transients, most of them elderly and dressed to kill: old women in lime-green or banana-yellow or Florida-orange pants suits, clutching Dixie Cups of small change in one hand, the lever of one of Vegas's fifty thousand slot machines in the other; old men with plastic teeth and sky-blue plastic suits shooting craps for a dollar, playing fifty-cent blackjack and three-dollar-limit stud poker; wrecks in wheelchairs or with walking frames, the humped, the bent, the skeleton-thin, and the obese, cashing in their Social Security checks, disability allowances, and pensions, waiting out their time in the hope of a miracle jackpot to transform their last pinched days. All of them are animated by a terrible Walpurgisnacht jollity—gamblers' optimism compounded by nostalgia. "THE GOOD OLD DAYS," say the neon signs, and "50¢ BAR DRINKS," "WIN A CAR 25¢," "FREE ASPIRIN & TENDER SYMPATHY." For the Snopeses of this world, Glitter Gulch is the absurd last stop on the slow train to the grave.

The young are fewer and not much more presentable. The trim, straight-backed young people who roam with such extraordinary grace and confidence around the rest of the United States and seem to be America's most triumphant export to Europe have mostly bypassed downtown Vegas. Instead, the rule for both sexes is big bottoms, beer bellies, and skin muddied by greasy burgers and French fries. The boys have tattoos on their arms, and the girls' heads are permed and dyed so relentlessly that a natural head of hair seems like a visitation; you stare after it, thinking, Now, who is *that*?

These people are essentially no different from the tourists on the Strip; they are simply less obviously affluent and considerably more single-minded. For Glitter Gulch is where the real action is, the thing in itself, with no pretensions to glamour or luxury, or even holiday-making. The people are there purely to gamble, and most of them, sooner or later, try their luck at the Horseshoe. It is the natural setting for the World Series of Poker.

Benny Binion is now seventy-eight years old, a genial, round-faced, round-bellied man, like a beardless Santa Claus in a Stetson, benign and smiling. Yet when he left Texas, thirty-six years ago, his police record included bootlegging, gambling, carrying concealed weapons, and two murder charges. (One was dismissed as "self-defense," and for the other he was given a suspended two-year sentence.) Like his contemporary and longtime friend Johnny Moss, three times World Poker Champion, Benny came from a dirt-poor family—his father was a stockman—and made his fortune the hard way, by his wits, starting as a "hip-pocket bootlegger." Moss explained to me, "He kept his stuff in a stash car round downtown Dallas. He'd go get a pint, put it in his hip pocket, sell it, and go get another pint." After the repeal of Prohibition, he moved into gambling, which was then, as it is now, illegal in the state of Texas. By the time the Second World War ended, he had become "kind of the boss of gambling down there in Dallas," his son Jack said. He left town precipitately in 1946. "I had to get out," he is reported to have said. "My sheriff got beat in the election that year." So he moved to Las Vegas, where gambling was legal, and eventually bought the Horseshoe, a shabby little casino that had begun life in 1937 as the El Dorado Club. As for the illegalities in his past, he says, "Tough times make tough people."



In 1953, the tough times caught up with him again: he was sentenced to five years in the federal penitentiary at Leavenworth for income-tax evasion. The casino was sold to a man from New Orleans, and the Binion clan did not regain complete control of it until 1964. Even then, the law was not quite finished with Benny, although he had become, I was told, the third-most-powerful man in Nevada. In the mid-seventies, he appeared before a grand jury to testify about money he had given to the local sheriff. "That wasn't no bribe," Benny said. "If that there sheriff hadn't paid it back, I'd have made him wash dishes for me in the kitchen." (The sheriff, incidentally, was said to be the second-most-powerful man in Nevada.) Later, when he was asked why he gave money to political candidates, including Gerald Ford, he replied, "For favors, what else?" The sheriff was indicted on a tax charge but the case was dismissed.

Tough times may make tough people, but age, reputation, and great wealth turn tough people into lovable old characters. Although the running of the casino is now in the hands of Jack Binion, when I was there Benny, wearing a cowboy shirt with solid-gold buttons, still held court every day in the Sombrero Room, the Horseshoe's restaurant, at a table overlooking the casino that was permanently reserved for him and his cronies. He eyes the people coming through the door, greets some, and spends a great deal of time on a private telephone that hangs on the wall behind his chair. In April of 1981, he was back in the news following the publication of a book by a Mafia informant who alleged that Benny had once taken out a two-hundred-thousand-dollar contract with a hit man. "Two hundred grand, never," an indignant friend said. "Two, maybe. In casino credits." Benny himself seemed unperturbed by the allegation.

That, too, was in character. "He doesn't care," said Jack Straus, one of the most formidable of all the poker professionals, and certainly the wittiest. "I get tired of hearing gamblers tell hero stories about themselves—how four big guys jumped them and they whipped the four dudes and seduced all the beautiful women. When Benny tells a story, he's the fool, he's the coward. I finally got to realizing that here is a man who knows exactly where he's at. He isn't the least bit interested in impressing you, because he knows who he really is. And he pays you the compliment of assuming that you know, too."

During the month of the World Series of Poker, Benny also has no time to try to impress anyone. Journalists and photographers flood into the Horseshoe from all over the world, television teams trail their cables around the poker room, stick the snouts of their cameras over the players' shoulders, and fuss with the lights, while the players arrive from every corner of America and also from London, Paris, Athens, Sydney, Oslo, and Dublin. "In the Old West, they used to have trappers' rendezvous every year," said Straus. "All the mountain men and people who lived up in the wilderness would get together in a certain spot to swap stories, have wrestling matches and canoe races, and see their friends. This is our trappers' rendezvous."

The World Series was first held in 1970, but the idea of it was born in 1949, when Nick the Greek Dandolos arrived in Las Vegas looking for a high-stakes poker game. There were big games in town even then, but all of them were ring games—that is, they consisted of seven or eight players—and all were played with limits on the betting. The Greek wanted to play no-limit, head-up poker—with a single opponent. Benny Binion, with a shrewd eye for free publicity for his recently acquired casino, offered to set up a game, provided it was played in public. When the Greek agreed, Binion called Johnny Moss, in Dallas.

Moss, who now has the face of an irritable basilisk, was forty-one at the time, smooth-cheeked, thin-haired, with wide-set, hooded eyes and a thin, scrolled mouth. He had been brought up on the streets of Dallas, a newsboy when he was eight, a telegraph messenger at nine. If you ask him when he learned to play cards, he tells you, with relish, that he learned how to cheat before he learned how to play. "Dealin' from the bottom of the pack, dealin' seconds, usin' mirrors, markin' cards, fadin' the dice—everything about cheatin'," he says. "We thought we were smart. Everybody we looked at was a sucker. The suckers had money an' we didn't. I could make a living, but it warn't a good livin'. I could never get hold of a lot of money, like a sucker could, so in time I come to see it was better to be a sucker. For sixty years now, I've been a sucker. But I'm hard to beat." At the age of fifteen, like a reformed criminal turning state's evidence, he quit cheating and went to work in a gambling house called The Otter's Club in Dallas as a lookout man, to protect the players against cheaters. It was there that he began to play cards seriously, and by the age of nineteen he was a road gambler, playing all over the Southwest, wherever the action was good, often staked by Benny Binion. But it was a precarious existence. "Every time I go into a game, the cheaters are there, the thieves are there, the hijackers are there, the police are after you, the rangers are after you," he says. "Then you have to get in an' beat the cards. You have to win an' get out with the money." For years, he played with a revolver in his jacket pocket at the table and a double-barrelled .410 shotgun on the back seat of his car. "I've been arrested five or six times for carryin' that there shotgun," he says. "I tell 'em I'm out bird huntin', an' I pay a two-hunnerd-dollar fine. But I have buckshot in my shells, an' they say, 'You shoot a bird, you blow it all to pieces.' I say, 'This is for a two-legged human bird, not a hummingbird.' On the road, you jus' have to be prepared. If they know you carry a shotgun into your hotel room with you, they better not be there waiting. Some places are easier to stick up than others." Then he adds, mildly, "Not that I'm mean or nothin'."

Moss played through the East Texas oil boom, and he played through the Depression. He also took up golf, which he played as brilliantly as he did poker and for equally exorbitant sums of money—sometimes for as much as a hundred thousand dollars a round, often for a thousand dollars a hole. But he had never been to Las Vegas, and when Benny Binion called him in 1949 he was exhausted from a four-day poker marathon. Nevertheless, he drove non-stop from Dallas straight to the Horseshoe, shook hands with the Greek, and sat down immediately to play.

In the weeks that followed, the Greek got his action and Binion got his publicity, to a degree that neither of them could have imagined. The game lasted for five months, with

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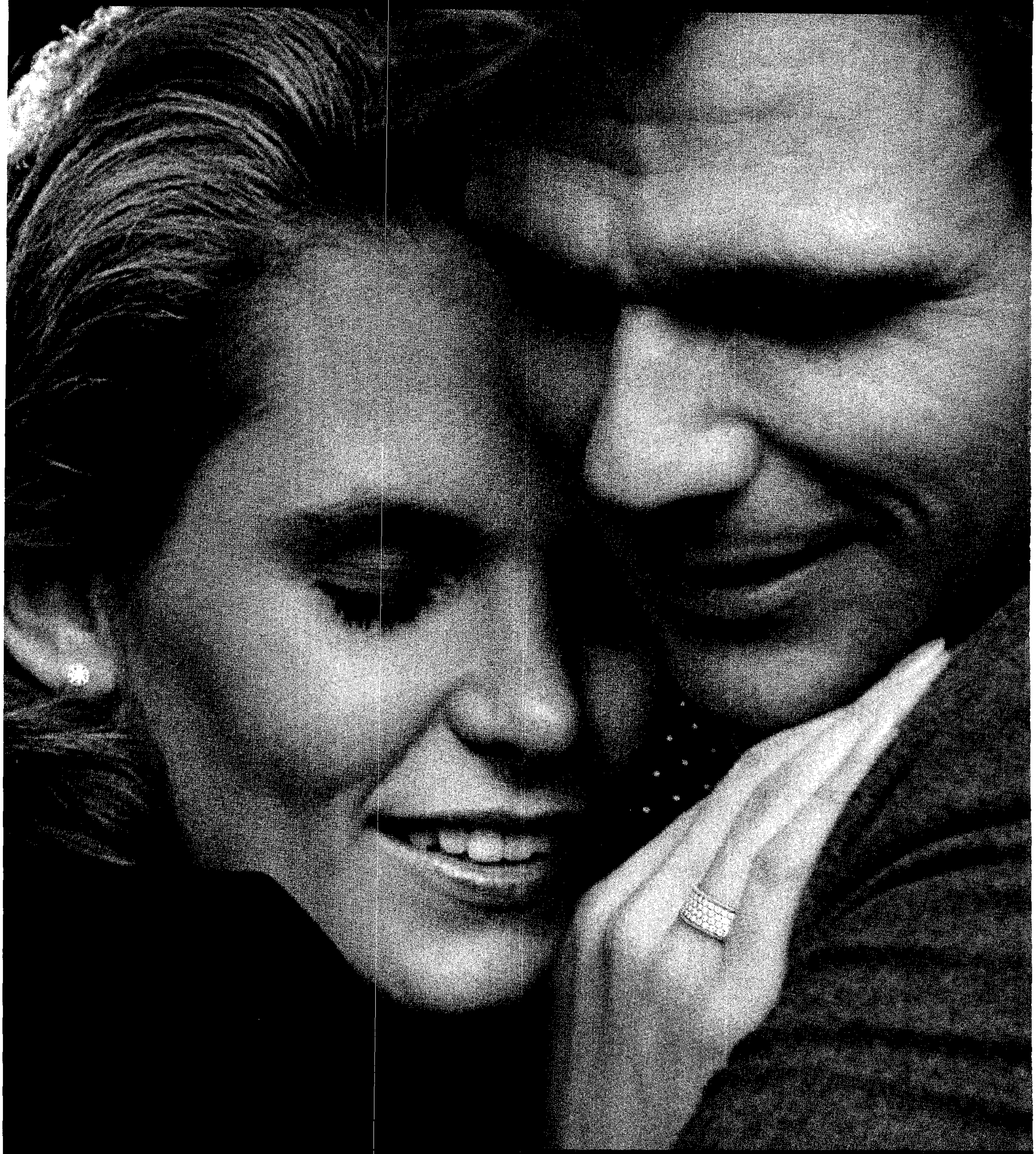

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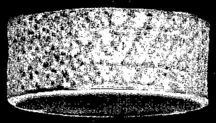

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breaks for sleep every four or five days, although the Greek, who was thirteen years older than Moss, spent most of his non-poker time at the craps tables and needled Moss about his frailty, saying, "What are you going to do, Johnny—sleep your life away?" But even before the first break the table, which Benny had thoughtfully positioned near the entrance to the casino, was surrounded by crowds six-deep, drawn by rumors of the biggest game the town had ever seen.

They began by playing five-card stud—"not my real strong game," Moss says—and during the weeks of this, while occasional players came and went, buying themselves in with a minimum stake of ten thousand dollars, Moss and the Greek played what has since become one of the most famous and expensive hands in the history of poker.

Five-card stud is the most classic of the games. Each of the players antes an agreed sum and on the first deal receives two cards—one face down, or in the hole, the other face up. They bet, and are then dealt three more cards face up, one at a time, checking (that is, not betting), betting, or folding after each card. As Moss and the Greek were playing it, each anted a hundred dollars, and the man with the lowest exposed card "brought it in"—that is, was forced to bet two hundred dollars. Before this particular deal started, each had about a quarter of a million dollars' worth of chips in front of him; by the time it was over, the entire half-million dollars was in the pot.

Moss's first two cards were a nine in the hole and a six exposed; the Greek was showing an eight. Moss tells the story now, as he has told it often before, with a kind of chewed-up satisfaction. His Texas drawl is so thick and slurred that it sounds at times like a foreign language, but the sentences are as economical as telegrams: "Low man brings it in. I bet two hunnerd with a six, he raises fifteen hunnerd or two thousand, I call him. The next card comes, I catch a nine, he catches a six. I got two nines then. I make a good bet—five thousand, maybe—an' he plays back at me, twenny-five thousand. I jus' call him. I'm figurin' to take all that money of his, an' I don't wanna scare him none. The next card comes, he catches a four, I catch a deuce. Ain't nuttin' he got can beat my two nines. I check then to trap him, an' he bets, jus' like I wanted. So I raise him *wa-ay* up there, an' he

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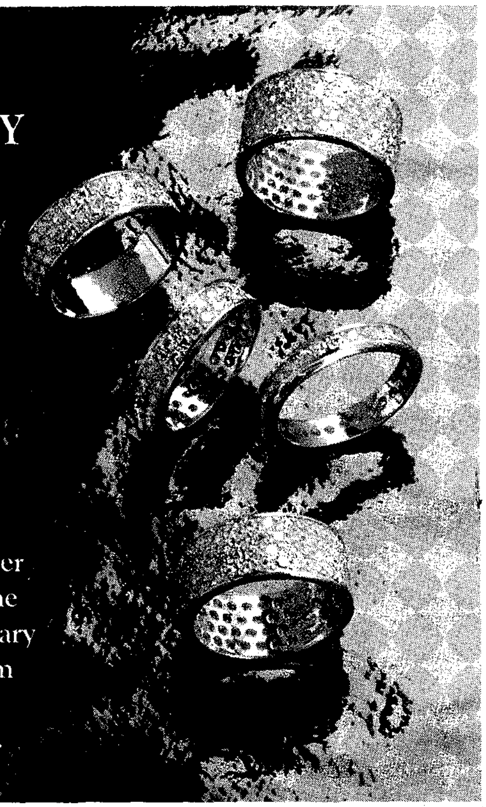

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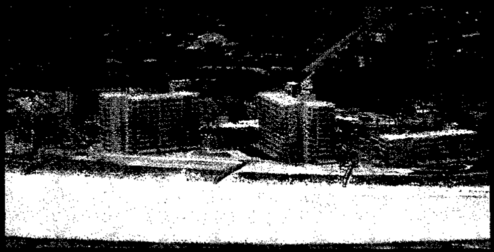

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calls. I got him in there, all right. There's maybe a hunnerd thousand dollars in that pot—maybe more; I don't know exactly—an' I'm a-winnin' it. On the end, I catch a trey, he catches a jack. He's high now with the jack an' he bets fifty thousand. I cain't put him on no jack in the hole, you know. He ain't gonna pay all that money jus' for the chance to outdraw me. I don't care what he catches, he's gotta beat those two nines of mine. So I move in with the rest of my money."

Nick Dandolos was then fifty-three years old, tall, trim, and polite. He is reputed to have had a degree from an English university and to have broken all the gamblers on the East Coast, including the legendary Arnold Rothstein, winning sixty million dollars in the process. In the moments of silence after Moss pushed what remained of his quarter of a million dollars' worth of chips into the center, the Greek eyed him, upright and unblinking, and then said softly, "Mr. Moss, I think I have a jack in the hole."

"Greek," Moss replied, "if you gotta jack down there, you're liable to win yourself one hell of a pot."

There was another aching silence, and then the Greek carefully pushed his own chips forward and turned over his hole card. It was the jack of diamonds.

"He outdrawed me," Moss says now. "We had about two hunnerd an' fifty thousand dollars apiece in that pot, and he win it. But that was all right. I finally broke him anyway."

That is the old man talking, secure in his fame and his investments, as remorseless now as he was then, the kind of character that John Wayne was fond of portraying—true grit without forgiveness, to be admired, but from a safe distance. Even now, only the hardest players are willing to sit down with him. In the course of their marathon, Moss and Nick the Greek played several forms of poker. They switched from five-card stud to draw, and both forms of lowball—ace-to-the-five and deuce-to-the-seven—and, gradually, Moss wore his opponent down. After almost exactly five months, the Greek lost his last pot, smiled courteously, and said in his soft voice, "Mr. Moss, I have to let you go." He bowed slightly and went upstairs to bed. Precisely how much he had lost is not certain; the rumor says two million.

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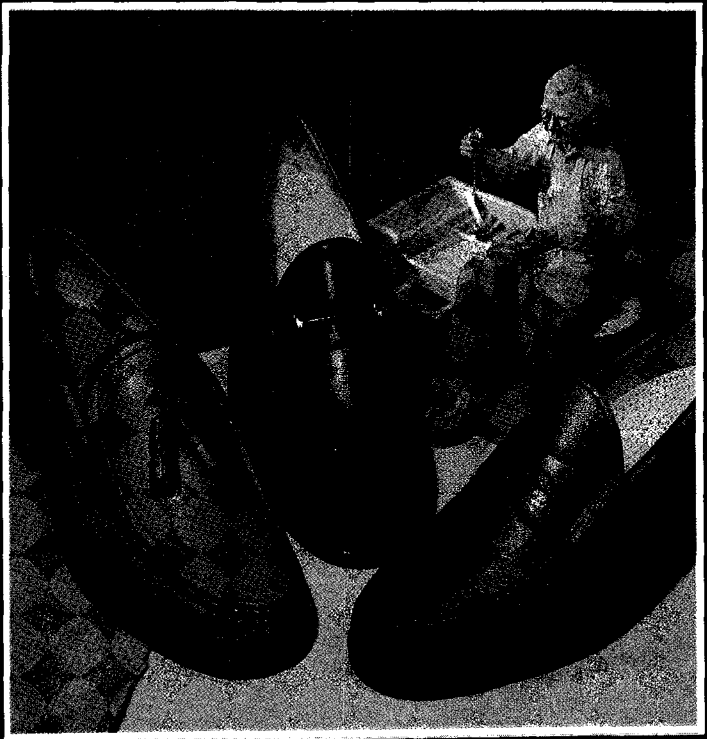

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public. There was no official prize money, and the champion was elected democratically by the assembled players. The man they chose was Johnny Moss. “In those days, it warn’t no one game an’ it warn’t no freeze-out,” he says. “You had to win all the games, win all the money. Then you’re the best player, an’ they vote on you. A lot of gamblers hate me, but they still vote on me being the best player in the world. It was pretty nice, you know, because there were a lot of good players in town. But most good players are only good at one game, an’ I was good at ’em all. I win all five games that year an’ they give me a big trophy. In ’74, they give me this here gold bracelet with the date engraved on the back.” The bracelet on his wrist, like his watch strap, is made up of extravagant chunks of gold and looks heavy enough for a Georgia chain gang. “I win a silver cup, too—solid silver, engraved. In all, it must have weighed forty pounds.”

Moss is now seventy-five years old, his eyes hooded and bleak, his face like saddle leather, deep lines carved from his nose almost to his chin, his rather elegantly shaped mouth retracted in permanent distaste. But he is still playing most nights and still winning. In 1981, he celebrated his fifty-fifth wedding anniversary by winning the seven-card-high-low-split event of the World Series against a lowering, impassive amateur with a ramrod back from Orlando, Florida, who looked like central casting’s idea of a C.I.A. heavy, although by trade he was an appliance repairman.

The final was as ritualized as a tribal dance. The winner of the third prize was a bundle of nervous tics in a blue satin track suit. He joggled his feet up and down ceaselessly, twitched, jerked, played with his chips, twisted about in his chair—a man with so many of what poker players call tells that no one was seemingly significant. But after he was eliminated the table became an island of stillness and concentration in the babble of the casino. Moss and the man from Orlando loomed erect in their chairs, barely moving. Neither of them looked at his seventh card when it was dealt to him, face down. Each shuffled it in with his hole cards, while they eyed each other steadily for what seemed like minutes on end. At last, they lifted the corners of their hole cards, peered at them blankly, and bet without speaking, in stacks of black and gray chips. As the game went on, Moss, who was wearing a pale-brown suit flecked with darker brown, like a chocolate-chip cookie, took off his heavy gold bracelet and watch and laid them on the table beside his chips. His shirt was open, showing a necklace of heavy twisted gold. The railbirds eyed all this treasure with delight. They love Moss, and he plays to them in a deadpan way, his old lizard eyes registering something almost like pleasure whenever they applaud a win. But he mutters angrily when he loses a big pot, and the sense of threat he exudes increases. He is said to be superstitious, and when he was running a poker room on the Strip he once fired a dealer who consistently gave him bad cards. In ominousness, however, he and his baleful opponent from Florida seemed well matched.

The prize money was piled at one corner of the table in packets of crisp hundred-dollar bills: thirty-three thousand five hundred dollars for the winner, thirteen thousand four hundred dollars for the runner-up. One of Binion’s giant security guards sat beside it, a Roman gladiator in desert brown, eyes fixed grimly on the cash—the only person there not watching the players or the cards.

It took Moss perhaps two hours head-to-head to clean out his opponent. Afterward, he and his wife, Virgie, helped the Binions and other gambling friends devour a bilious anniversary cake in the Sombrero Room. That night, Moss was playing again.

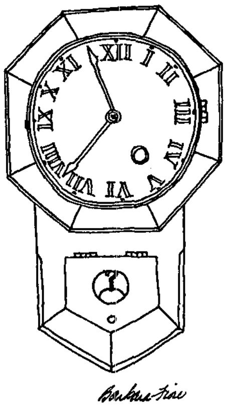
SINCE that first meeting at Binion’s, in 1970, when the top professionals elected Moss champion, the tournament has expanded and the rules have changed. The contestants now buy themselves into each game—the stakes vary from four hundred dollars for the women’s seven-card high to ten thousand dollars for the main event—and play freeze-out; that is, they play until they have no more chips in front of them, and one man has won them all. In 1971, Moss won the main title outright from six fellow-professionals; he was beaten in the final by Puggy Pearson in 1973; and he won it again the following year, at the age of sixty-seven. By 1981, there were thirteen separate competitions, and the number of contestants for the world title had risen to seventy-five, the three-quarters of a million prize money being divided on a sliding scale among the nine players who reached the final table, the winner taking half, the runner-up twenty per cent, and so on down to two per cent each for the seventh, eighth, and ninth places.

Nearly all forms of poker are played during the tournament except five-card stud, which now seems too slow-paced and inflexible to interest the top players. But the game that decides who will win the title of World Champion is hold ’em, which originated in Texas toward the end of the last century and is still regarded with suspicion outside the Southwest. (I myself have tried, and failed, to introduce it into two regular New York poker games. In London, oddly, poker players are less rigid.) Hold ’em is a variation of seven-card stud with communal exposed cards. Each player antes and is dealt two cards face down; the man to the left of the dealer is forced to bet blind—without looking at the cards he has been dealt. (In casinos, where there is a professional, nonplaying dealer, an object like a small hockey puck, called the button, is placed in front of each player in turn to indicate that he is “dealer” for that hand.) The other players either see the bet, raise it, or fold. Then three communal cards, called the flop, are dealt face up in the center of the table, and there is another round of betting, but this time the players may check. Then two more cards—known as Fourth Street and Fifth Street—are dealt face up, one at a time, with a round of betting after each. The five cards in the center are common to all the players, who use them in combination with their hole cards to make the strongest possible hands.

The variations and subtleties are infinite. A pair of aces in the hole is the strongest start, but after the flop anything is possible: a small pair in the hole suddenly becomes three of a kind (in Vegas, called a set); two connecting or suited cards turn into a straight or a flush. The complexities are so great that Doyle Brunson devotes two hundred pages of “Super/System” to hold ’em—three or four times the space allowed for any other form of poker. “Hold ’em is to stud and draw what chess is to checkers,” Johnny Moss has said. It is a game of wits and psychology and position, of bluffing, thrust, and counterthrust, and depends more on skill and character than on receiving good cards. Like Kenny

Rogers' gambler, "You've got to know when to hold 'em, Know when to fold 'em, Know when to walk away, And know when to run."

Hold 'em is played in a number of Las Vegas casinos, but nearly always with a limit on the bet allowed. Even the Golden Nugget—the frontier-style casino right across the street from the Horseshoe—though it boasts one of the largest, busiest poker rooms in town and specializes in hold 'em, rarely has games with a limit higher than thirty dollars on the first two rounds of betting and sixty dollars on Fourth and Fifth Street, with a maximum of four raises a round. In what is called a jammed pot, where two or more players have very strong cards and are reraising each other as much as possible, that is enough to lose several hundred dollars a hand, yet this is small beer to the top professionals, most of whom look down on low-limit poker as an unimaginative, mechanical game. Jack Straus described it contemptuously as "a disciplined job," saying, "Anybody who wants to work out the mathematics can be a limit player and chisel out an existence. You just have to condition yourself to sit there and wait." Serious players, he meant, know the odds on filling a straight or a flush or a full house with one or two cards to come. In limit poker, where they also know precisely how much this will cost them and how much money the pot will be offering if they call or raise or are reraised, every move can be reduced to mathematics and probabilities. The difference between the top limit players and those who are slightly less good is in the ability to get the maximum from winning hands and lose the minimum when the hands are weak.



When the champions play limit poker, they play with limits so high that the antes alone will destroy the conservative player while he waits. Moss told me of one seven-card-stud game in which the ante was eight hundred dollars, the dealer bet sixteen hundred dollars blind, the low card brought it in for thirty-two hundred dollars, and the opening raise was to sixty-four hundred dollars. "I won eight hunnerd and sevenny thousand dollars that night—the most I ever did make in one game," he said. "The biggest check"—chip—"they had was a hunnerd-dollar black. I had racks of 'em piled up on the floor beside my chair; there warn't no room on the table." I asked him who had been playing. "Coast gamblers, guys from Los Angeles," he answered, and added helpfully, "Rich people, mostly."

"I suspect that not too much tax had been paid on that money," a friend told me. "It wasn't a poker game, it was a laundromat."

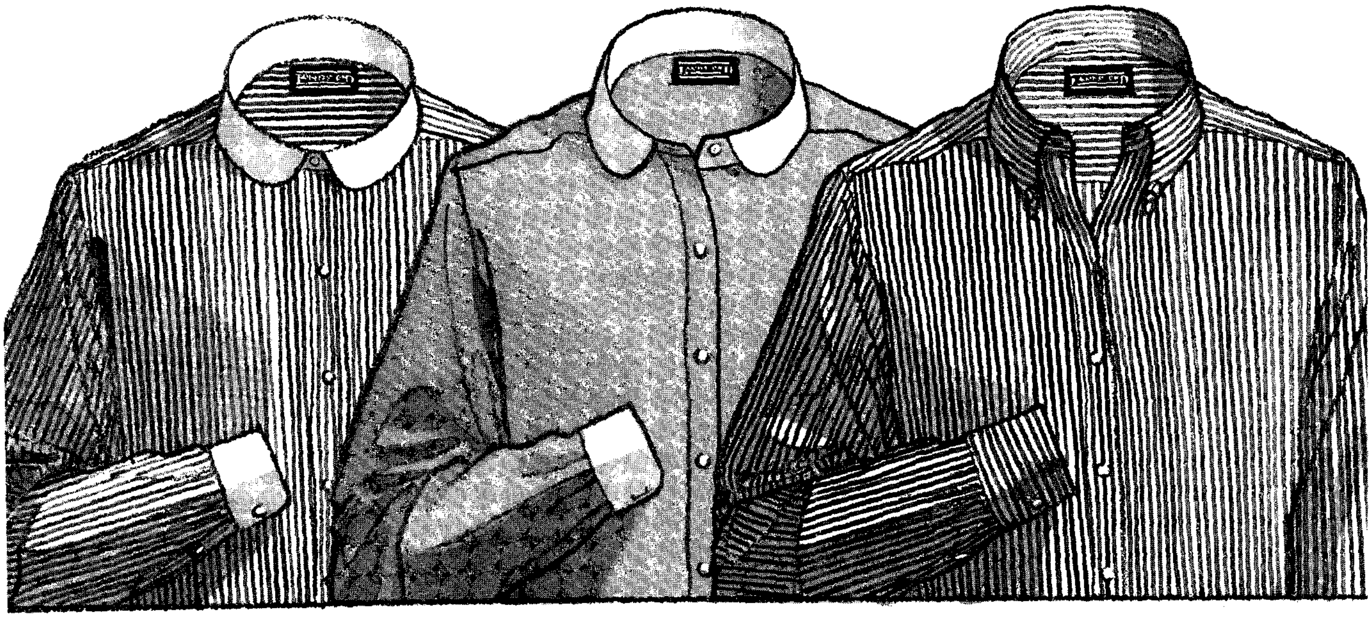
There are few limit games as awesome as that, although seven-card stud, with its five betting intervals, is always played with limits in Vegas, often three hundred and six hundred dollars, sometimes five hundred and a thousand, occasionally higher. At those dizzy altitudes, the same skill and imagination are required as in no-limit poker. The cheaper the games, the more like hard work they become. For twenty-four of the twenty-seven nights I was in Vegas, I played three-dollar- and six-dollar-limit hold 'em at the Golden Nugget: eleven players to a table, of whom eight were usually locals—retired truck drivers and farmers, unretired divorcées eking out their alimony, and always two or three dealers from other games using their rest periods to test their skills. We would sit there, all of us, throwing away hand after hand after hand, waiting for ironclad certainties—"the nuts"—or an edge, or, better still, for a weary tourist to drive in off the desert and start chasing his luck. It was an exercise in discipline and patience, and had less in common with gambling than with a term in the salt mines.

Across the road at Binion's, however, hold 'em is played without limit. This means that after the obligatory opening bets a player may move in with all the chips he has in front of him, no matter how much is in the pot. When Thomas (Amarillo Slim) Preston beat Puggy Pearson for the title in 1972, for example, he bet his whole stack—fifty-one thousand dollars—into a pot containing a mere sixteen thousand. "It feels better in," he announced to the goggling railbirds. Puggy decided he was bluffing, called, and lost.

The opportunities for bluffing are as infinite as the psychological nuances. (Amarillo Slim had previously set Puggy up by raising blind every bet Puggy made, and so stealing pots with worthless cards. But when he made his big move he had a strong hand and Puggy was ready to call.) "No-limit is a test of intestinal fortitude," Jack Straus has said. Like the other top players, he judges his opponents not by their mathematical ability but by what the gamblers call heart—the courage to bet *all* their money when they reckon that the odds are in their favor. Crandall Addington, a supremely elegant Texan, who regularly sets the sartorial standard for the tournament, and who, unlike the other members of the poker élite, plays more for pleasure than for money, since he has already made his fortune in real estate and oil, has said, "Limit poker is a science, but no-limit is an art. In limit, you are shooting at a target. In no-limit, the target comes alive and shoots back at you."

An example is one of the heaviest of the perpetual side games, when Addington, Straus, Brunson, and Puggy Pearson were wisecracking, needling, and outsmarting each other from behind mountains of chips. Also at the table was Jesse Alto, a car dealer from Houston and a regular contender in the World Series, who placed second in 1976 and fifth in 1978. Alto is about fifty years old, trim, compact, with graying hair and heavy forearms, on one of them a small tattoo slightly smeared, as if he had tried to erase it. It contrasts oddly with his platinum Audemars Piguet watch. He is a complex man with a complex background: his parents were Lebanese, but he was born in Mexico and raised in Israel; he arrived in Texas as a deckhand on a cargo ship when he was nineteen, and, apart from a couple of years in New York, has lived there ever since. Many of the top poker players are ex-athletes—both Brunson and Straus were basketball stars at school—but Alto is one of the few who have remained more or less permanently in training, through racquetball and golf. In a world of marathon players, he has a reputation for exceptional stamina; he once played for a whole week without losing his concentration. He is also a gifted linguist.

Before the flop, Alto raised the opening bet, then called when he was modestly reraised by Straus. The other players folded. The flop came king, ten, eight, offsuit. Alto, who had a king and eight of diamonds in the hole, checked in order to trap Straus. Straus paused, then bet a thousand dollars—again, modest by the standards of the game, but large enough for a



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bluff. This was what Alto had been hoping for; with his two pairs, kings and eights, he raised five thousand dollars.

Straus slumped even further in his chair. He is over six and a half feet tall—his nickname is Treetops—but sits hunched at the table, shoulders forward, curly gray hair and curly gray beard sunk between them, as though denying his size. Away from the poker table as well as at it, he is a hunter—a crack shot—and he has a marksman's eyes: dark blue, slanting, the left eye always slightly closed, like a man taking aim. He watched Alto in silence for a long time, but Alto did not stir. Then Straus cupped his hands around his cards and squeezed them slightly upward with his thumbs. Another pause. Then quickly, almost fretfully, he pushed several stacks of chips into the center.

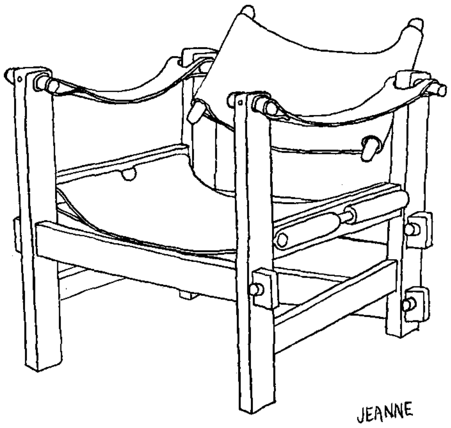
The dealer counted them carefully and said, "Raise thirty thousand dollars."

The target had come alive and was shooting back.

Alto did not move, but his erect back seemed to curve infinitesimally, as if under the pressure of a great weight. He sat considering the alternatives while Puggy Pearson lit a giant cigar. Did Straus have a king and an ace in the hole, or even two pairs, like Alto himself? Or did he have a pair that gave him, with the flop, a set of kings or tens or eights? Or did he have a queen and a jack in the hole and was betting "on the come," hoping to complete a straight? Or, since this was Jack Straus, the master of the withering bluff and a man with a reputation for total fearlessness—he once bet a hundred thousand on the outcome of a high-school basketball game—was he simply bluffing?

For long, empty minutes, the two players faced each other across the table, unmoving and unspeaking, like figures in stone. Finally, Alto counted out his chips and pushed them gloomily forward. Straus's bet had set him in for all his money, so there would be no more betting. He turned over his king and eight. Straus nodded, and then, in a matter-of-fact way, turned over his hole cards: two tens. The ten in the center had given him a set of three, and only another king could save Alto. The dealer burned—discarded—the top card and dealt a seven, burned the next card and dealt a four. The three tens were good.

In hold 'em at this level, the target does not just shoot back, it also shifts about like a will-o'-the-wisp, maneuvering for position. In the previous hour, Straus had twice bet in precisely the same pattern, but with far weaker cards; both times, Alto had called him and won. The only difference was that the sums involved had been much smaller—a few thousand rather than tens of thousands. I had watched those two earlier hands uncomprehending, for it seemed—even to an outsider and a relative novice like me—that Straus was betting on losing cards. Yet I was also aware that if I knew it so did he, since one of the many gifts that separate the professionals from the amateurs is the ability to read their opponents' hands with uncanny accuracy from the tiniest clues: timing, position, the way their fingers move their chips, even the pulse beat in their neck. In "Super/System," Doyle Brunson gives numerous instances of how and why he knew precisely which cards his opponent had in the hole. Just two days before that side game between Straus and Alto, Stuart Ungar, who won the World Championship in 1980, at the age of twenty-six, had called a last bet of several hundred dollars in a game of seven-card stud holding only a pair of threes, then raked in the pot contemptuously before his opponent showed his down cards, knowing without a flicker of doubt that all that the other man had in the hole "was dreams." Straus, although in 1981 he still had not won the championship, has the same unnerving clairvoyance. Like all the top professionals, he has played for so long and with such concentration that nothing is new or unfamiliar or unfathomable. Yet there he was, apparently throwing away money as carelessly as any tyro. I was wrong, of course. Straus had been setting Alto up for the kill, raising his confidence, lulling him into the belief that he, Straus, was playing loosely, so that when his moment came he could make the same ploy with a monster hand and Alto would call him. The two losing hands were investments that finally yielded a disproportionate return—eight thousand dollars to make forty thousand.



"At this level, gambling is a business," Jack Binion told me one day. "These guys are trying to beat each other in the subtlest possible ways, but if they wanted to rationalize it they could say it is a high-risk, high-return investment that is also fun to do." In business terms, the ten-minute transaction between Straus and Alto was nothing very remarkable. It was equally unremarkable in terms of the games played all day and every day when the poker room at the Horseshoe is open. Yet it produced for the winner enough money to support an average family for a year in comfort.

Granted, average wage earners do not play high-stakes poker in Las Vegas. There are estimated to be over fifty million poker players in the United States alone, and only two or three hundred of them ever graduate to the games at Binion's; of those players, perhaps twenty would stand a chance in the really big games. Even so, the casualness and imperturbability with which that élite handles huge sums of money is beyond ordinary understanding. It is a question not just of a different level of skill but of a different ordering of reality.

Not long before Straus won his big pot from Alto, he had removed his cash from the table when the players broke for lunch, leaving at his place about fifteen thousand dollars' worth of chips. When the game resumed, Brunson gestured toward Straus's stack and said, "Playing cheap today, Jack?" Straus looked down at the towers of black chips in front of him and feigned sheepishness. "I plumb forgot I didn't have any money out there," he said. "No wonder I felt naked." And he pulled from his trouser pockets seven or eight banded packets of five thousand dollars and dumped them carelessly on the table.

"The sums involved are beyond reason. They blow your mind." That was said to me not by an outsider but by A. J. Myers, a regular and successful player, who in 1981 won the biggest of the seven-card-high competitions, walking away with sixty-seven thousand five hundred dollars in prize money. Myers, a retired real-estate investor, who looks like a fleshy West Coast version of Saul Bellow—professorial half-glasses perched on the end

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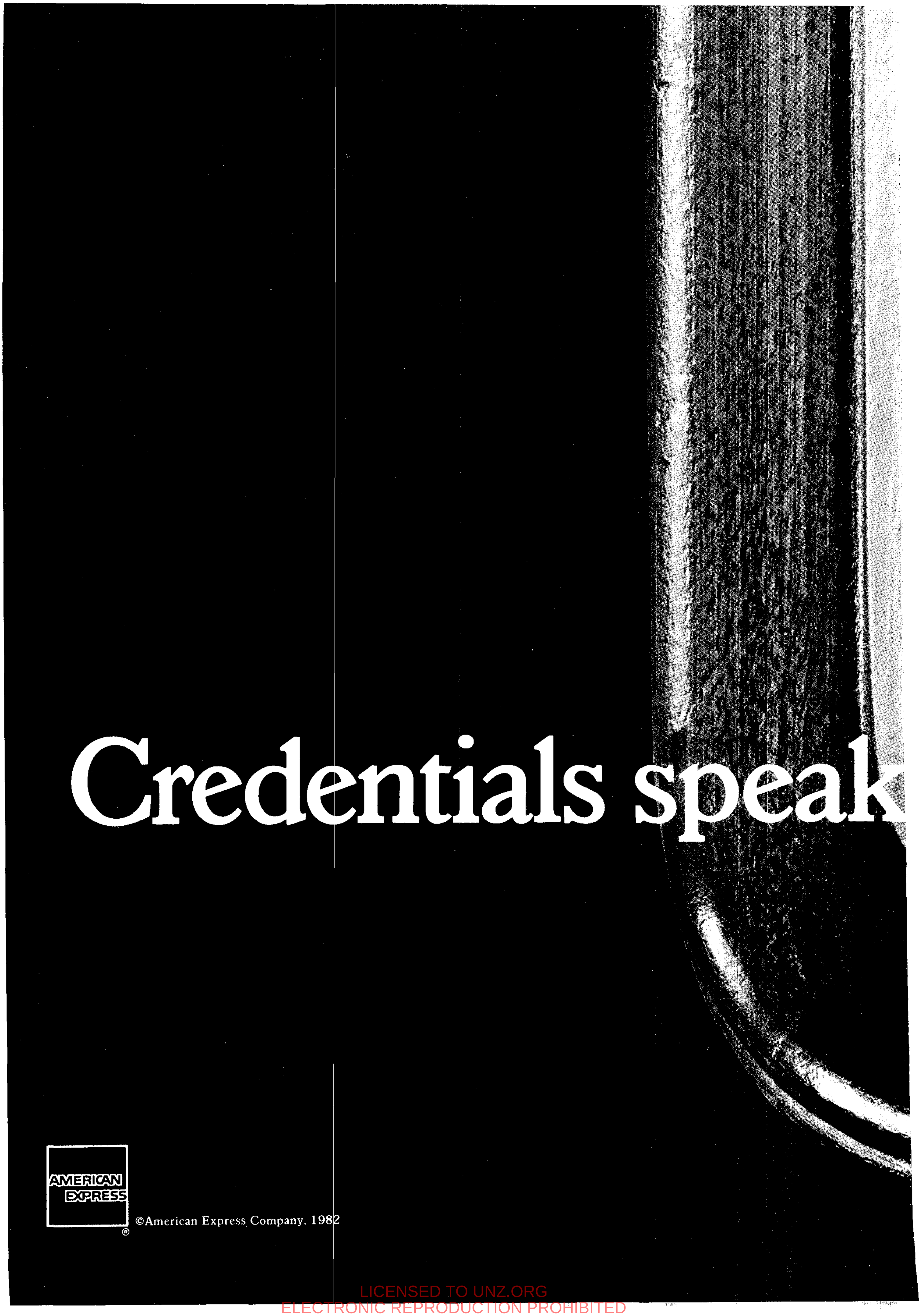
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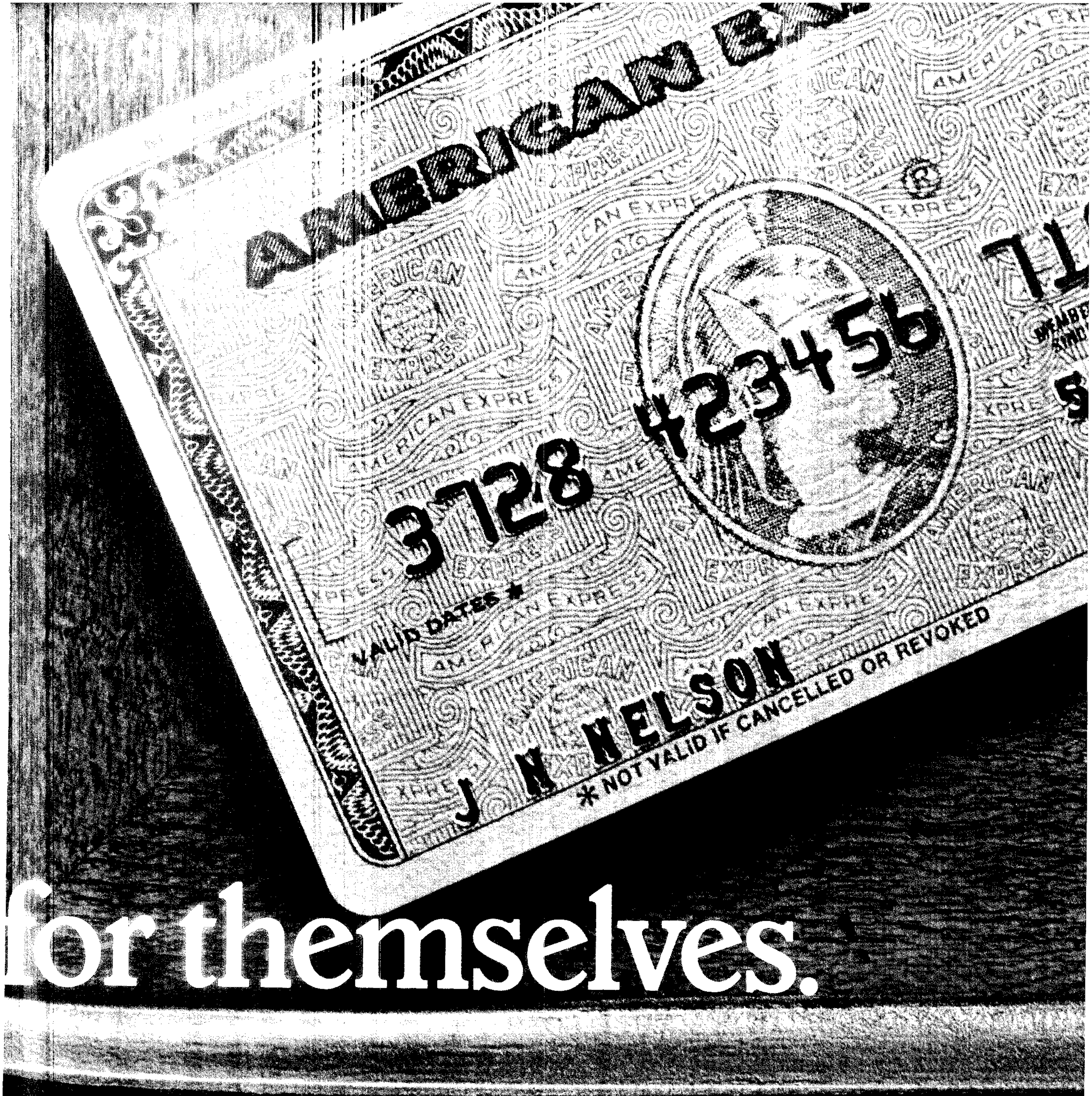

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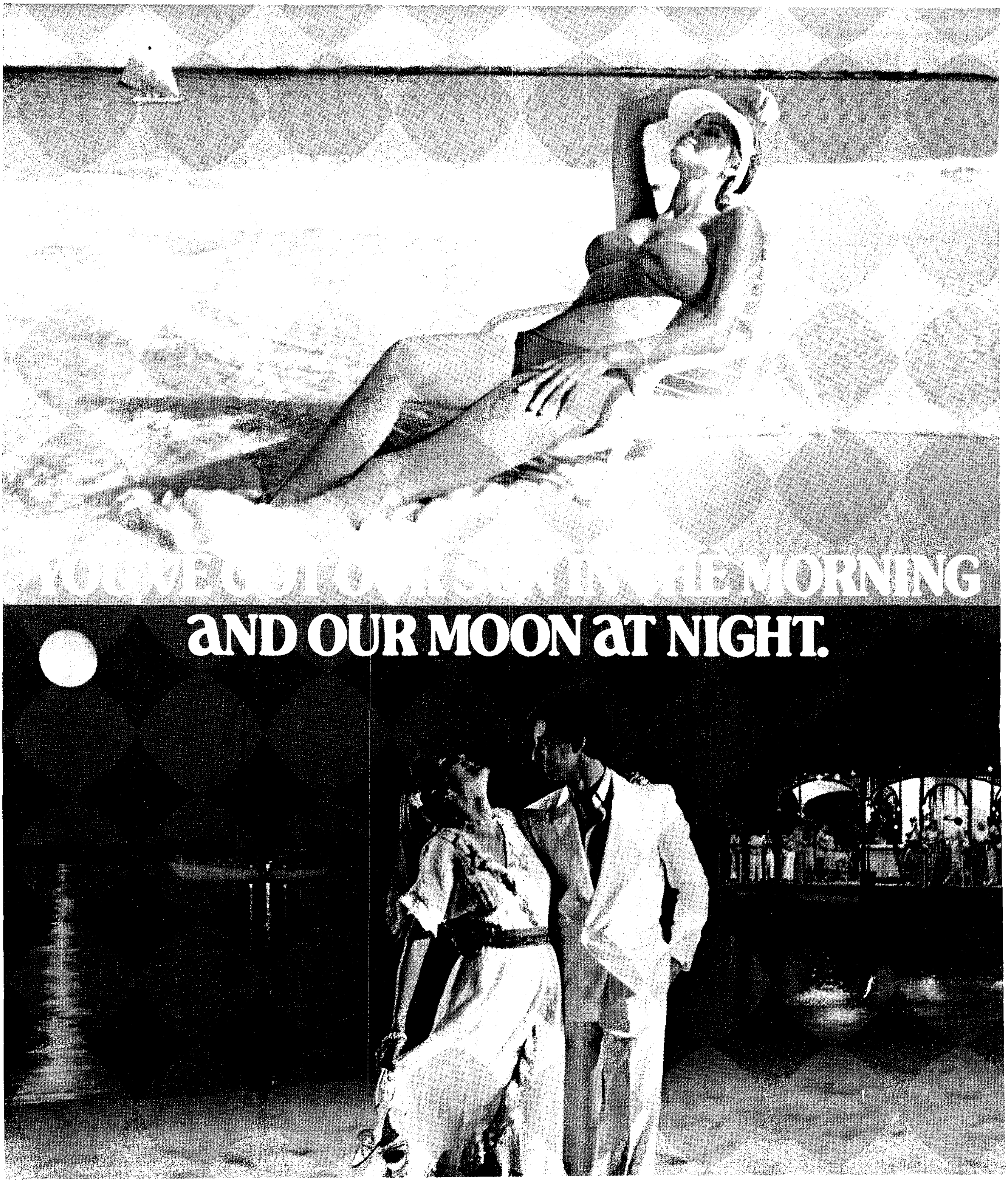
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It's Better In The Bahamas

of his nose, red floral band around his straw hat—plays regularly in the big seven-stud games with the top professionals, and commutes from his home in Beverly Hills, sometimes as often as a dozen times a year. Yet he still finds it hard to adjust to the professional gamblers' indifference to money. "They look at me, and there is absolutely no understanding between us," he told me. "They will bet on a ballgame—football, basketball, baseball—sums that stagger the imagination. I know many wealthy people, some of them worth well over a hundred million, who would never bet more than a couple of hundred dollars on a game, because they would feel terrible if they lost. Yet some of the gamblers here, who are worth nothing compared with those people, will bet a hundred thousand without blinking. Most of them are average golfers—they shoot in the middle eighties—but at the end of a match they regularly settle up for fifty or a hundred thousand dollars. Even the golf pros don't play for that kind of money, and if they did they probably wouldn't be able to hold a putter. If a golf pro who shot seventy played a gambler who shot eighty-two and gave him the right handicap, he would lose every time. The pressure would be too much for him; for the gambler, it is a stimulus."

"Right," said Straus. "I even drive farther when the stakes are high."

In poker, as in golf, at least gamblers are betting on their own skills. The cards go round, but in the end the best players win. When the poker players bet on sports, however, they are putting down gigantic sums on events wholly beyond their control. Even the late Arnold Rothstein managed to fix baseball's World Series only once. "Players who make tremendous amounts of money through their talents at the poker table go out and destroy it betting on things they have no control over," Myers said.

We were sitting in the Sombrero Room with Myers' wife and his daughter, a California Matisse odalisque, who had recently returned from a grand tour of Europe. They nodded understandingly, knowing that Myers had earned his right to disapprove by surviving a gambling fever as virulent as any junkie's addiction. He first came to Las Vegas to shoot craps some years before. He had a princely credit line at all the major hotels and was comped—provided with a free luxury suite, free food and drink, and whatever other indulgence he fancied ("all the fringe benefits of being a big sucker," he called it)—wherever he went. He had run through a fortune "in taxed money" before he realized that his dream life in Vegas was endangering his real life at home.

"So I stopped."

"Just like that?"

"I believe in will power. And in responsibility to my family. If I'd been alone, perhaps I wouldn't have quit. But with a wife and child I had to take stock of myself. I knew there was nothing in the world that could support the habit I had."

"Then what?"

"I learned to play blackjack, which afforded me the luxury of sitting down while I gambled rather than standing at a craps table and wearing myself out. In very short order, I was an expert, and the casinos wouldn't allow me to play."

So he turned to poker, which he had played for years in relatively small-stakes games in California. "At first, I was very much in awe of the professionals, and consequently found it hard to compete," he told me. "I'm not really talking about the level of their skill, I'm talking about money. The games were of a size I wasn't used to, and until you get used to the high stakes you pull in your horns and play too conservatively. The money freezes you up, and you become tight-weak. You try not to play until you have an unbeatable hand, and when someone makes a big bet at you you automatically assume the worst. The tight-weak player is the kind the pros most love to play with; they run rings around him. But in time I got used to the size of the game. It is a question of respect, not fear. I'm a wealthy guy, and I don't believe I was ever really afraid of the big money. But it took me a while to realize that if I had too much respect for the money I couldn't play properly. Chips are like a bag of beans; they have a relative value and are worthless until the game is over. That is the only attitude you can have in high-stakes poker. Even so, I still prefer a medium-sized game, like the two-hundred-dollar-and-four-hundred-dollar limit, where if you're going bad you can lose twenty or thirty thousand dollars. The highest I've played is five-hundred-and-a-thousand, where you can easily lose a hundred thousand dollars. They've begged me to play in the thousand-and-two-thousand-dollar game, but I have always refused. It was just too high; I didn't want it to affect my game. And the truth is, I don't even like the five-hundred-and-a-thousand-dollar limit. There is too much money involved. It offends my sensibilities. Yet time and again I've been in medium-sized games with players who don't look as if they could afford to play fifteen-and-thirty-dollar limit, and they have pleaded with me to raise the stakes. God knows where the money comes from, yet if they lose they always pay."

It offends his sensibilities. His wife nodded, the odalisque daughter smiled, and Myers' eerie resemblance to Saul Bellow increased. His judgment seemed, in the circumstances, the right and proper one. Yet in the noisy gloom of Binion's, with the midday heat blasting the street outside and the signs blazing and jumping like a fever, the words he used were as foreign as Urdu—like the exhibition of pictures painted by local schoolchildren which lined the corridors of McCarran International Airport when I arrived. "KIDS LIVE IN VEGAS, TOO," the signs repeated, but the only kids I saw were the stunned waifs half asleep on the carpeted sidewalk outside the Golden Nugget, waiting for their parents to blow the week's housekeeping, and the lost souls, faces sticky with ice cream, wandering around the mezzanine of Circus Circus. Las Vegas is no more a place for childhood than it is a place for sensibility. It is a town without grace and without nuance, where the only useful virtues are experience, survival, and money.

"In Vegas, they weigh you up in gold," said Straus. "They call it the golden rule: the man who has the gold makes the rules." They also say that it is the only town where visitors are made to think that a hundred-dollar bill will not buy a loaf of bread. Ulvis Alberts, for example, is a free-lance photographer who has covered the poker tournament for the last five years, and whose marvellously atmospheric portraits of the players were published in 1981 in a collection called "Poker Face." During his first visit to Binion's, a number of the contestants asked to buy blowups of the pictures he had taken of them. "That will be seventy-five dollars," he said, and suddenly there was a problem: when the gamblers pulled out their giant wads of cash, none of them had change. "So I charged a hundred dollars," he told me, "and everyone was happy."

Another example: Chip Reese has been in Las Vegas since 1974. His hair is blond and unruly, his plumpness is turning to fat, and his round face appears jolly until you see his eyes. He dresses in extravagantly colored velvet track suits, but this Vegas dishabille is misleading: his background is solid upper-middle-class Ohio, and he graduated from Dartmouth. At Dartmouth, however, the pattern was already set; after he left, the Big Daddy Lipinski Poker Room at the Beta Theta Pi house was renamed the David E. Reese Memorial Card Room, and a plaque was put up in his honor, listing the names of the fraternity brothers he had fleeced during his four years' residence. To raise money for law school, he took a job as a manufacturer's representative, but he hated it, despite the pay, and quit after nine months. On his way out to see a friend in California, he stopped off in Vegas for a weekend. He had four hundred dollars in his pocket when he sat down in a twenty-dollar-limit seven-card-stud game; at the end of the first day he had won eight hundred dollars; the next day he won a thousand dollars; within a fortnight he was twenty-five thousand dollars ahead. He has been in Vegas ever since, and went on to run the poker room at the Dunes. Reese is rumored to have won a couple of million dollars in his first three years in town. This may or may not be true. What is certain is that the continual movement of huge sums of money across the poker table has fractured his sense of reality. "I'd like to be able to say I'm in tune with world affairs and worried about my budget," he told me. His years in Nevada have not affected his accent; his voice is crisp and Ivy League, without a trace of drawl. "But when I play poker for hundreds of thousands of dollars a day what do I care if a Popsicle costs ten cents here and twelve cents there? Big-limit poker is a separate world, and makes it hard to relate to other aspects of what's going on. Hundred-dollar bills in Vegas are like one-dollar bills anywhere else. I don't even carry dollar bills except to tip the cocktail waitresses, and I can't remember the last time I had coins in my pockets. In other towns, these habits can cause a problem: I've stopped at a drive-in for a hamburger, and when the bill came for five dollars I've pulled out a hundred-dollar bill. They look at me as if I were some kind of thief, and say, 'We can't change this.' You don't think about these things until they happen to you."

The degree to which Reese fails to think about these things is famous around town. He is rumored to have lost in his own house every piece of jewelry he has ever owned, and for a period to have paid without question a monthly water bill of two thousand dollars. After some time, the water company discovered that the pipe supplying his house had broken and was flooding the area for acres around. Reese himself had not noticed.

"Money means nothing," he told me. "If you really cared about it, you wouldn't be able to sit down at a poker table and bluff off fifty thousand dollars. If I thought what that could buy me, I could not be a good player. Money is just the yardstick by which you measure your success. In Monopoly, you try to win all the cash by the end of the game. It's the same in poker: you treat chips like play money and don't think about it until it's all over."

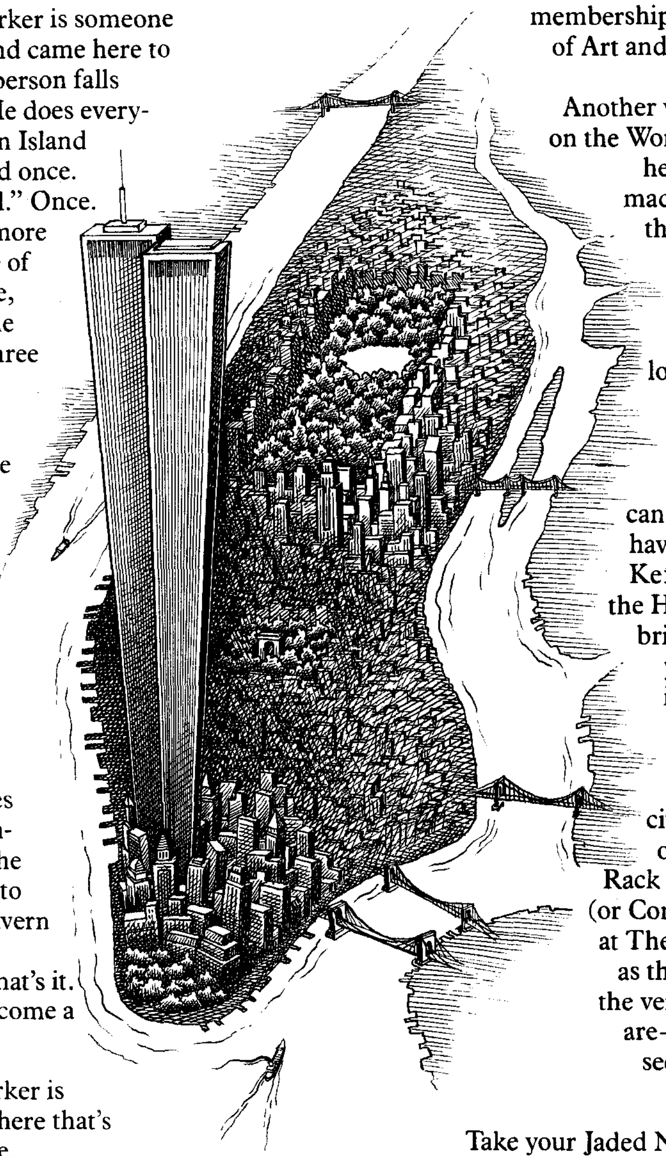
It is this money element that makes poker different from all other card games. According to Terence Reese, who has captained the English bridge team, there is little to chose between bridge and poker in terms of skill. Yet poker looks like a gambling game—and was classified as such by the British Gaming Act of 1968—because, unlike bridge, it must be played for money. Chips are not just a way of keeping score; they combine with the cards to form the very language of the game. What you do with your chips—how and when you bet or check or raise—is a way of communicating with your opponents. "You ask subtle questions with your chips," said the subtle Crandall Addington. The questions you ask and the answers you receive may be misleading—a gigantic bet may be a sign of weakness, an attempt to drive the other players out of the pot because you do not have the hand you purport to have—but the combination of cards and money and position at the table creates a complex pattern of information (or illusion) that controls the flow of the game. In poker, betting and what is called money management are as much an art as reading the cards and judging the probabilities.

"In order to play high-stakes poker, you need to have a total disregard for money," Doyle Brunson said to me. "It is just an instrument, and the only time you notice it is when you run out." Among the top players, however, running out of money is a relative concept. Although they all announce, with pride, that every real pro has gone broke more times than he can count, being out of money does not seem to affect their spendthrift habits. Johnny Moss told me that when he was younger he had had no difficulty in borrowing ten thousand dollars to play poker but had known no one he could ask for five hundred dollars simply to get out of town. He also said that gamblers drove the best cars, wore the best clothes, stayed at the best hotels, got the best-looking women, and lived like millionaires even when they were broke; the amount of money they had at any particular moment did not alter their habits one jot.

Not long ago, for example, Stu Ungar, who, like Chip Reese, is rumored to have turned over millions of dollars in a couple of years in Las Vegas, winning at cards, losing at sports betting, was due to play in a game in Reno. But he missed the plane at McCarran, and the next departure was four hours later. Without hesitating, he hired a private jet. The commercial flight would have cost him thirty dollars, and the charter cost him twelve hundred, but his destination was a high-stakes game, so there seemed no point in hanging around.

"I'd go to the moon if they were anteing high enough," said Bobby Baldwin, another young World Championship winner. Meanwhile, he commutes the eleven hundred and eighty miles to Las Vegas from his home, in Tulsa, and reckons to spend twenty thousand dollars a year on air fares. "One night, I chartered a Learjet and then found the game had broken up while I was airborne," he told me. He shrugged laconically. "Dry run." As for his living expenses, he said, "I have to make fifteen to twenty thousand dollars a month to break even. To tell you the truth, my wife and I never go near a supermarket. Our groceries are delivered to our home and put in the kitchen cabinets by the delivery boy." Baldwin is not given to boasting; he has a student's small, bespectacled face under a halo of curls, and his manner—away from the poker table—is preternaturally modest. He was merely indicating the degree to which high-stakes poker inoculates the players against economic reality. Money is no longer money to

HOW TO MAKE A JADED NEW YORKER BECOME A NATIVE NEW YORKER AGAIN



By definition, a Native New Yorker is someone who grew up somewhere else and came here to go to work. Once arrived, this person falls seriously in love with the city. He does everything. Once. He rides the Staten Island Ferry once. He goes to Roseland once. And he saves up and goes to "21." Once. Then he starts becoming a bit more selective. He settles on a couple of Italian restaurants in the Village, a particular Chinese place on the Upper West Side, and two or three music places. He is now an official Native New Yorker.

Then the change begins. Maybe it's inertia, maybe familiarity, maybe the difficulty of getting around New York. He starts pulling back. He goes only to places in his neighborhood. If he is an Upper East Side New Yorker, he never goes to Macy's. If he's a Downtown New Yorker or a West-of-the-Hudson New Yorker, he never goes to Bloomingdale's. He goes to Balducci's or Zabar's. Whichever is in his territory. One or the other, but never both. He goes to Melon's or Clarke's or Pete's Tavern a couple of times a week. And maybe two other places. And that's it. The Native New Yorker has become a Jaded New Yorker.

By definition, a Jaded New Yorker is someone who rarely goes anywhere that's more than 15 blocks from home.

There are ways of coping with a Jaded New Yorker. One is to give him a season's subscription to a series at Lincoln Center. Or send him a membership at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and take him to a private showing.

Another way is to take him to Windows on the World. At Windows on the World, he'll find most of the things that made him a Native New Yorker in the first place. The same variety, the same sense of discovery.

The atmosphere is New York stylish. The people are nice to look at and interesting to talk to. Like the people you met when you first came to the city.

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the professionals; it is like a wrench to a plumber—a tool of the trade. It is also, most often, not a green treasury bill validated by a President's face but a colored plastic disc stamped with a number and the name of a casino. A New York gambler who goes by the name of Big Julie once remarked sagely, "The guy who invented gambling was bright, but the guy who invented the chip was a genius." The chip is like a conjurer's sleight of hand that turns an egg into a billiard ball, a necessity of life into a plaything, reality into illusion. Players who freeze up at the sight of a fifty-dollar bill, thinking it could buy them a week's food at the supermarket, will toss two green chips into the pot without even hesitating if the odds are right. "Chips don't have a home," said Jack Straus. "People will play much higher with chips than they will with cash. For some reason, it is hard for inferior players to turn loose of money, but give them chips and they get caught up, mesmerized by the game."

Chips, in fact, are the currency of Las Vegas. When a gambler arranges a line of credit with a casino, he takes the money in chips. You tip with them, pay for meals and drink and sex with them, and in more relaxed times you could buy goods with them in the stores. The better adjusted to them you become, the further reality recedes. To hand over a couple of pieces of unimposing black plastic and receive for them a two-hundred-dollar jacket is no longer a business transaction, it is magic. "This town hypnotizes people," Doyle Brunson said. "Guys who won't bet twenty dollars at home come out here and bet five hundred or a thousand without even thinking—particularly during the poker tournament. Playing constantly for a month or more is like being in a pressure cooker. If you are not careful, you reach boiling point and explode. Then you just throw your money away. They keep hammering and hammering at you, until you lose touch with reality about everything. That's when people go off and lose huge sums."

Early one evening, I shared a table in the Sombrero Room—the social hub of the tournament—with a young cowboy from East Texas. His white T-shirt was soiled, his jeans were frayed, and a downy, struggling mustache made him look even younger than he was, which was twenty-four. Between mouthfuls of fried chicken, he explained to me in great detail the hands on which he had been outdrawn that day. He had lost twenty-five thousand dollars in eight hours, but he did not seem particularly concerned.

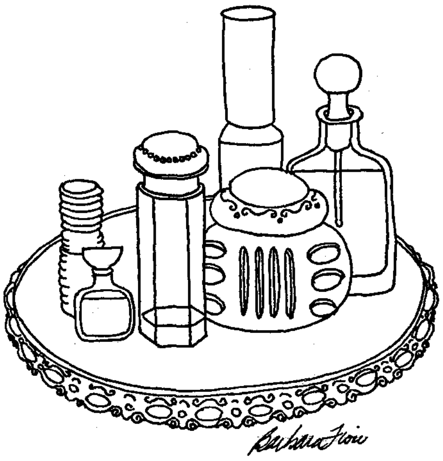
A couple of days later, Eric Drache wandered into the Sombrero Room, looking as cheerful as always but vaguely preoccupied. Drache, who is one of the world's best seven-card-stud players, is from New York and New Jersey. He went to Rutgers on a chemistry scholarship but dropped out after two years (he was at the race track on the day of a vital examination), learned to play poker seriously while serving as an M.P. in Vietnam, ran his own game in and around New York, came out to Vegas for a weekend with six hundred dollars, and has never returned East. He won seventy thousand dollars in his first three months in town, lost seven hundred and fifty thousand in the next two years, won it back, lost, won, and has been on the roundabout ever since. He now organizes the World Series for the Binions. He is a witty, highly articulate man with a beautiful English wife—the daughter of a retired colonel from Crediton, Devon, who is studying at Columbia and also plays a mean game of seven-card stud—and apparently limitless reserves of charm and affability.

"How goes it?" I asked.

He shook his head. "Terrible."

"How terrible?"

"One-sixty. I hit a bad streak and threw off ten thousand an hour." He shrugged, laughed, and moved off through the crowded restaurant, chatting and joking with the other players. Twenty minutes later, he returned and paused by my table near the entrance, deep in discussion with another professional. I heard him say, "He owes me ten and a half, plus one-eight from Reno . . ." Then he noticed me still sitting there. "Excuse me," he said. "I didn't see you. Money tends to close your mind to common civility, and I'm negotiating a loan. The worst thing is to play poker with your own money." He and the other man both laughed, then drifted off to the poker tables outside.



That insouciance is the test of the true professionals, but they do not necessarily acquire it from a psychopathic deformation of character, or even from the strong inoculation against the value of money that every visitor receives, willy-nilly, from Las Vegas. It comes, instead, from painful experience. "We used to bet all we had, day after day," said Doyle Brunson. "And every other day we went broke." Out of that emerges a kind of bedrock endurance that manifests itself as an attitude toward money.

"Playing poker for a living gives you backbone," Bobby Baldwin said. "You cannot survive without that intangible quality we call heart. I don't care how bad you are going or how good, you have to stand solid. Poker is a character builder—especially the bad times. The mark of a top player is not how much he wins when he is winning but how he handles his losses. If you win for thirty days in a row, that makes no difference if on the thirty-first you have a bad night, go crazy, and throw it all away. You can't survive that way. In this business, you have to be able to live with adversity. You will have losing nights—a lot of them. You'll go off on some big numbers sometimes. I've lost several hundred thousand in one evening, but I didn't go up to my room and shoot myself; instead, I went to bed and slept like a baby. When some of the guys take a big loss, they sleep like a baby in a different way: they sleep an hour and cry an hour, sleep an hour and cry an hour. But I myself find it easier to sleep when I lose than when I win. That may sound odd, but it's true. I think the reason is that when I have an extremely bad night I go to bed and escape from it in sleep. But when I've won I'm all pumped up and excited; I can't unwind as quickly as I can when I'm down and semidepressed."

It sounds like a natural and rather graceful code of behavior until you register how much money this quiet, mild-mannered young man from Tulsa is referring to when he talks about "going off on some big numbers"—losses that leave him only "semidepressed." In money matters, the top professionals cultivate toward their own finances a positively corporate, penthouse-suite detachment. Sums that would annihilate an ordinary private citizen seem to them mere hiccups in their annual cash flow.

As usual, it was Straus who put this matter in a human perspective. "If money is your god, you can forget no-limit poker, because it's going to hurt you too much to turn loose of it," he said to me. "The way I feel about those pieces of green paper is, you can't take them with you and they may not have much value in five years' time, but right now I can take them and trade them in for pleasure, or to bring pleasure to other people. If they had wanted you to hold on to money, they'd have made it with handles on."

People like Straus gravitate to Las Vegas because it is the one place where that total disregard for money essential to the high roller precisely matches the fever that the town induces in everyone. At one end are Straus, Brunson, Baldwin, Drache, Ungar; at the other, the little old ladies with their Dixie Cups of change in one hand and work glove on the other, priming the slots hour after hour, waiting for the shower of jackpot gold that will transform their shabby lives: deus ex machina.

To the poker professionals, the god appeared a couple of years ago in an odd disguise. Jimmy Chagra was a cocaine dealer who is now serving thirty years in the federal penitentiary at Leavenworth for his "continuing criminal enterprise." He came to town for a final fling while he waited for his case to come up before a judge known in Texas as Maximum John. (Shortly before the trial, Maximum John was shot dead, and Chagra was duly indicted for plotting that, too, but was acquitted.) Chagra was to Vegas what the Arab princes are to the London casinos: a platonic ideal incarnate, a high roller with no tomorrow, backed by the virtually unlimited and untaxed resources of the narcotics business. In the town's early days, before the operators realized that they could make more profits by scrupulous honesty than they could decently cope with, the casinos were rumored to have been used by the mob for laundering dirty money. Chagra's money was as black as pitch, but he was not interested in cleaning it up—only in enjoying it while he had time. Naturally, the only casino willing to allow him to gamble for the deranged sums he insisted on was Binion's Horseshoe. He played there every night—craps, blackjack, roulette—and during the day he took a little fresh air out on the Dunes golf course with the boys, sometimes for

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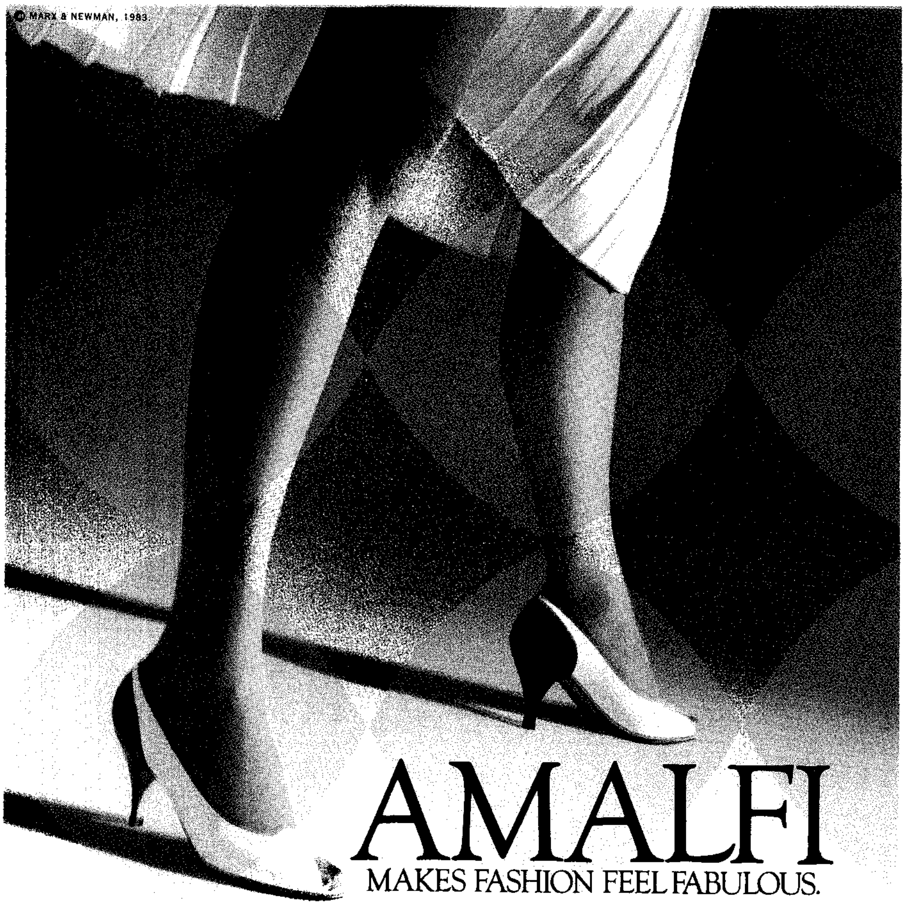
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half a million a round. Since he was a good gin-rummy player and Binion's poker room was open for the World Series, he decided to learn hold 'em and deuce-to-the-seven, or Kansas City, lowball.

The professionals were delighted to teach him, but even they were awed by the size of the games he wanted to play. The minimum table stake was fifty thousand dollars, but few of them risked sitting down with so little, because time after time Chagra would throw in twenty-thousand-dollar bets blind, which he said were "just to liven the game up a little." Once the action was properly under way, there would be an average of two million dollars on the table every night—"so many checks," said Jack Binion, "that you couldn't see the green baize." Jack Binion does not impress easily, but even now he speaks of Chagra's gambling in puzzled, hushed tones, as he might speak of some inexplicable natural phenomenon. With reason: in the weeks Chagra was there, it is said, he beat the Horseshoe for between two and three million dollars at craps and blackjack. Early one morning, he got up from a bad session at poker, strolled across to the blackjack table, bet a hundred thousand dollars on a single hand, won, and went to bed. Chagra's legend goes right down through the casino hierarchy: during one particularly stormy poker game, he tipped a cocktail waitress ten thousand dollars—two packets of fifty hundred-dollar bills—when she brought him a complimentary bottle of Mountain Valley water.

"In poker, money is power," said Alvin Thomas, alias Titanic Thompson, alias Damon Runyon's Sky Masterson, an old-time road gambler, now deceased, who would bet untold amounts on anything if he thought he had a sufficient edge. But money is power only in the hands of an expert. An innocent journalist once asked Amarillo Slim why a Texas oil millionaire who could not be scared out of a pot would not eventually see off the professionals. "Son," replied Slim, who has a reputation for vivid, folksy imagery, "that millionaire would have as much chance in a game with us as you would of getting a French kiss out of the Statue of Liberty." Likewise Jimmy Chagra: the two or three million he won at craps and blackjack he lost back remorselessly and with interest at the poker table. And the crazed action he inspired brought in another high roller, a local named Major Riddle (Major was his first name, not his rank), who owned the Silverbird and a hefty share of several other Las Vegas casinos. Riddle was in his early seventies when Chagra appeared, but chose to ignore this fact. At one point, he played against Chagra for three days and three nights without a break, until he was called out to a board meeting at the Dunes, of which he was president. He left only on the condition that the game not break up while he was away. "Naturally, you want to beat the guy," said Eric Drache. "But you don't want to kill him." As it happened, Riddle died a few months later, having happily dropped three million while Chagra was in town.

When I asked who won all the money, I was given a neutral, poker player's answer: "The cash got distributed pretty good." Only Straus was more forthcoming. He told me, "It was like that TV program 'Fantasy Island.' I kept waiting for Tattoo to come on and say it was all a dream: 'Look, boss! The plane! The plane!' "

For one gambler, though, the bonanza did not end when Chagra went to the penitentiary. This man had a friend named Travis, who had "got into a little trouble" and was paying for it with six years in Leavenworth. But Travis was also a gambler—his specialty, like Chagra's, was gin rummy—and he owed the man in Las Vegas a favor for the times he had staked Travis when Travis was short of cash. Discreet arrangements were made for Travis to play gin rummy with Chagra on behalf of his friend for a percentage of the profits, all financial transactions to take place outside the penitentiary, between Chagra's connections and the man in Las Vegas. "While everyone was reminiscing about the good old days when Jimmy was in town, I was actually playing him," this man said. "A few weeks later, Travis called me collect from the pen. He said, 'The guy's a pushover. We won fifty-six thousand. Let's go on up. Let's go on up to five hundred grand.' I said, 'Sure, Travis, sure we'll go on up. But slowly does it. Take it easy.' So the connections came through with the money. I paid Travis's percentage into a bank and waited for him to call me collect about the next game. And waited and waited. Weeks went by, then months, and still no word. I thought, That damn fool is playing him with his own money; he'll choke when Chagra raises it up real high, and get himself wiped out. The next thing I heard,

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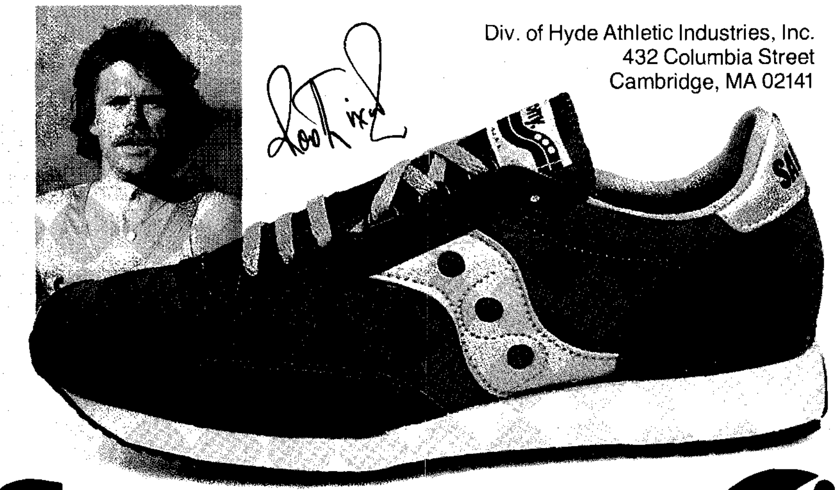

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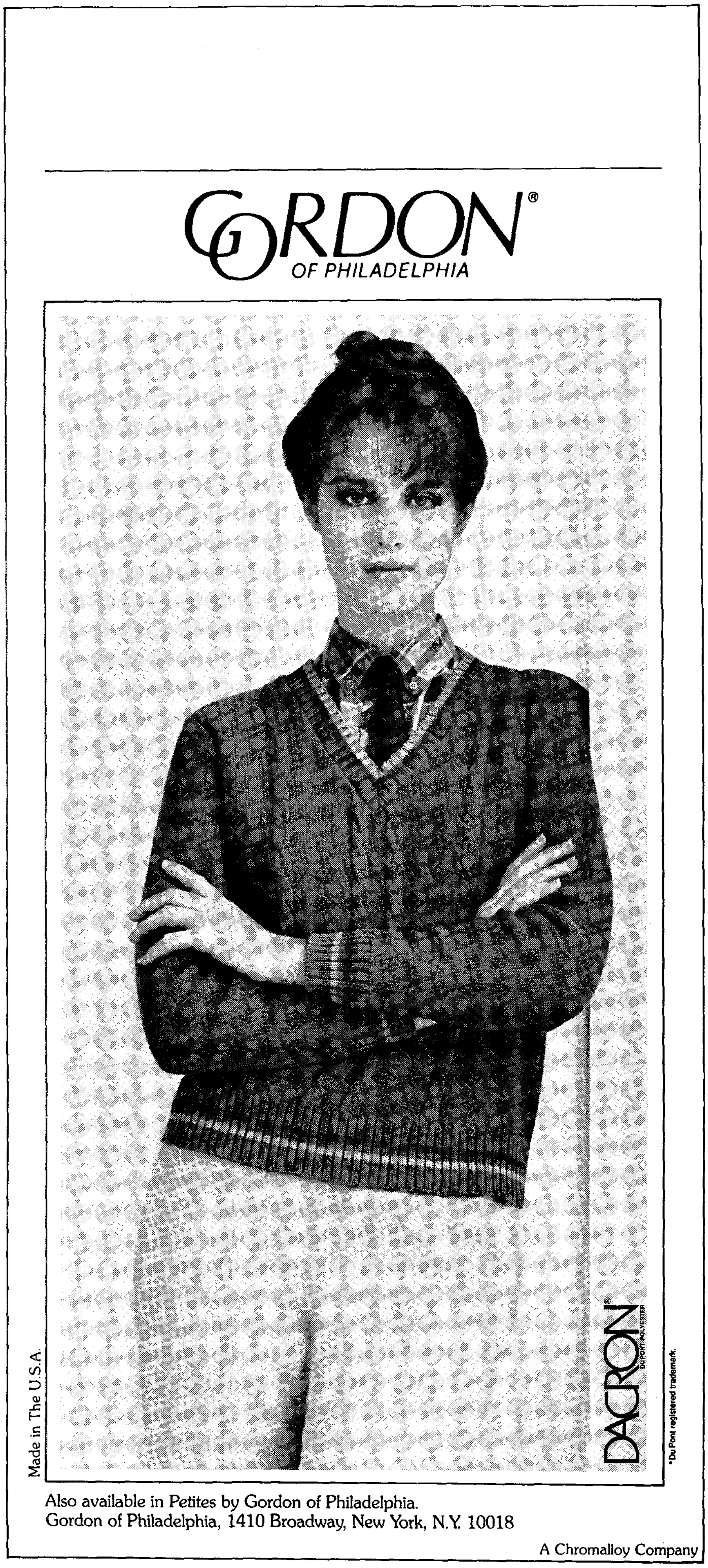
Travis had died of a heart attack. I guess he was so happy with all that money he'd won he just couldn't contain himself. So that was the end of the game. Hard for Travis, hard for me, too."

As is true of all gambling stories, the point of this one is not the score itself but the imaginative coup of scoring in impossible circumstances. According to Mickey Appleman, it is this element of imagination that separates the true high rollers from those who merely grind out a living from cards. Appleman is the odd man out at the tournament—a New York intellectual among the cowboys, clever eyes peering out from under a Harpo Marx mop of blond curls, clothes like a hippie's unmade bed. He grew up on Long Island and emerged from graduate school at Case Western Reserve and Cleveland State with qualifications that he is reluctant to mention in the hearing of the other poker players: an M.B.A. in statistics, and an almost completed master's in education. "I was supposed to go into the business world, but I didn't want to get a short haircut and wing-tipped shoes," he told me. So he took up community work: in Washington, D.C., after the riots of 1968; at a treatment center for alcoholics in Harlem. He also spent years in assorted styles of psychoanalysis, but when I asked him if analysis had helped his addiction to gambling he answered sharply, "Gambling was never an addiction. On the contrary, it helped me more than analysis. I suffered from depression—I was so entwined with my inner world I never had a chance to enjoy myself. For me, activity was the answer. I took up gambling professionally *after* I finished with psychoanalysis, and the depressions never returned."

But the habit of introspection dies hard, and Appleman has thought about gambling as intently as he has thought about more orthodox subjects. Indeed, introspection and the openness to experience that goes with it are, he thinks, the qualities that distinguish the great players from the pedestrians. "There are no soft spots out here," he said. "They are all good players, with sophisticated techniques that you have to analyze and incorporate into your own play. It's like any other field: you have to develop yourself *and* your game. Poker is a skill, it's an art, it's a science. You have to improve continually and know your own weaknesses. To be successful, you must be realistic. Up to a certain point, you have to believe you're a really good player, but you also have to realize what you're up against. There can be no self-deception. But confidence is a double-edged sword. It's the down side of a gambler that ruins him, not his up side. When you're playing well, you can be as good as anybody, but how you handle yourself under pressure when you're playing badly is the character test that separates the men from the boys. Yet the strange thing is, to be a high roller necessarily means having a down side. Certain individuals come here just to make money: they grind, grind, grind in the small-stakes games, they make a living, and they have no down side. But they have no gamble in them, either, so they will never know the enjoyment of the high roller, the romance of gambling. Poker playing is strictly a business to these small-stakes players, but to the high rollers it's business and it's also pleasure; it's fun, it's a game, it's gamesmanship. After all, what are we all here for at the Horseshoe? When you are playing for hundreds of thousands of dollars, it's not the money. I mean, how much do you need? It's the gamesmanship, the competition, the thrill of letting it all hang out. Poker for big money is a high-risk sport, like driving a racing car. I've always appreciated the high rollers, because pettiness has no part in their lives. The technicians who do well in the small games will never derive the same thrill from it as somebody who is willing to roll it out there. Of course, different types of people look for different levels of satisfaction. I'm a romantic, and for me gambling is a romance. That's what I enjoy; the rest is by the way. I play and I play and I play; then I pick up the pieces and see how I did. It's only at that moment that I realize I was playing for real money. How could I play at all if I started thinking about the sums involved? Can you measure the goods and services a ten-thousand-dollar bet is going to buy? No. But you can measure the intrinsic feeling you get from gambling. Everybody has these subtle energies floating around inside. Some people get through their whole lives sublimating them, repressing them. But there are gamblers here who don't sublimate them; they let them out. That's what high rolling is about."

The Sombrero Room is as far from community centers in the slums as the poker games that Appleman now plays are from the quarter-and-fifty-cent-limit games in which he started,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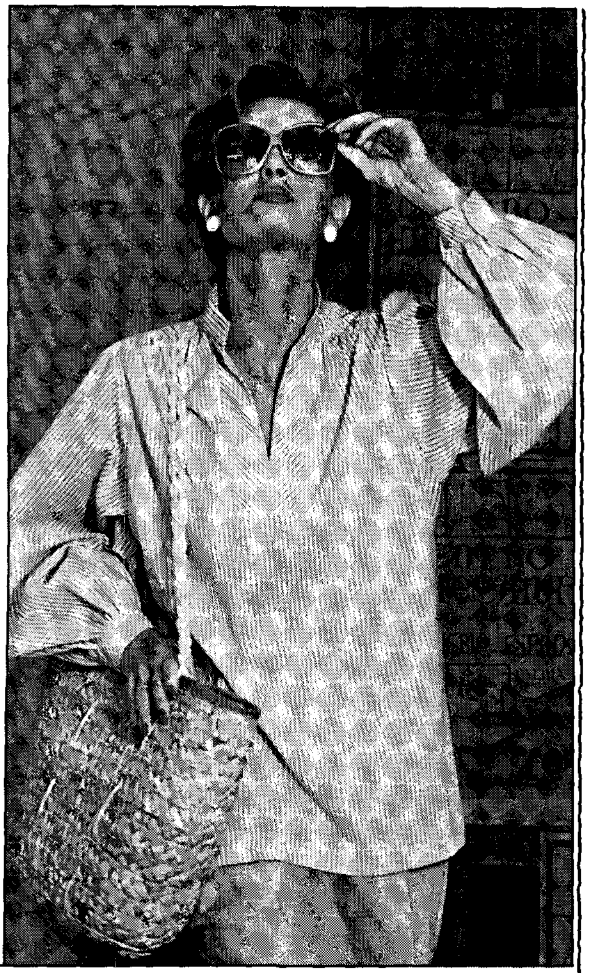

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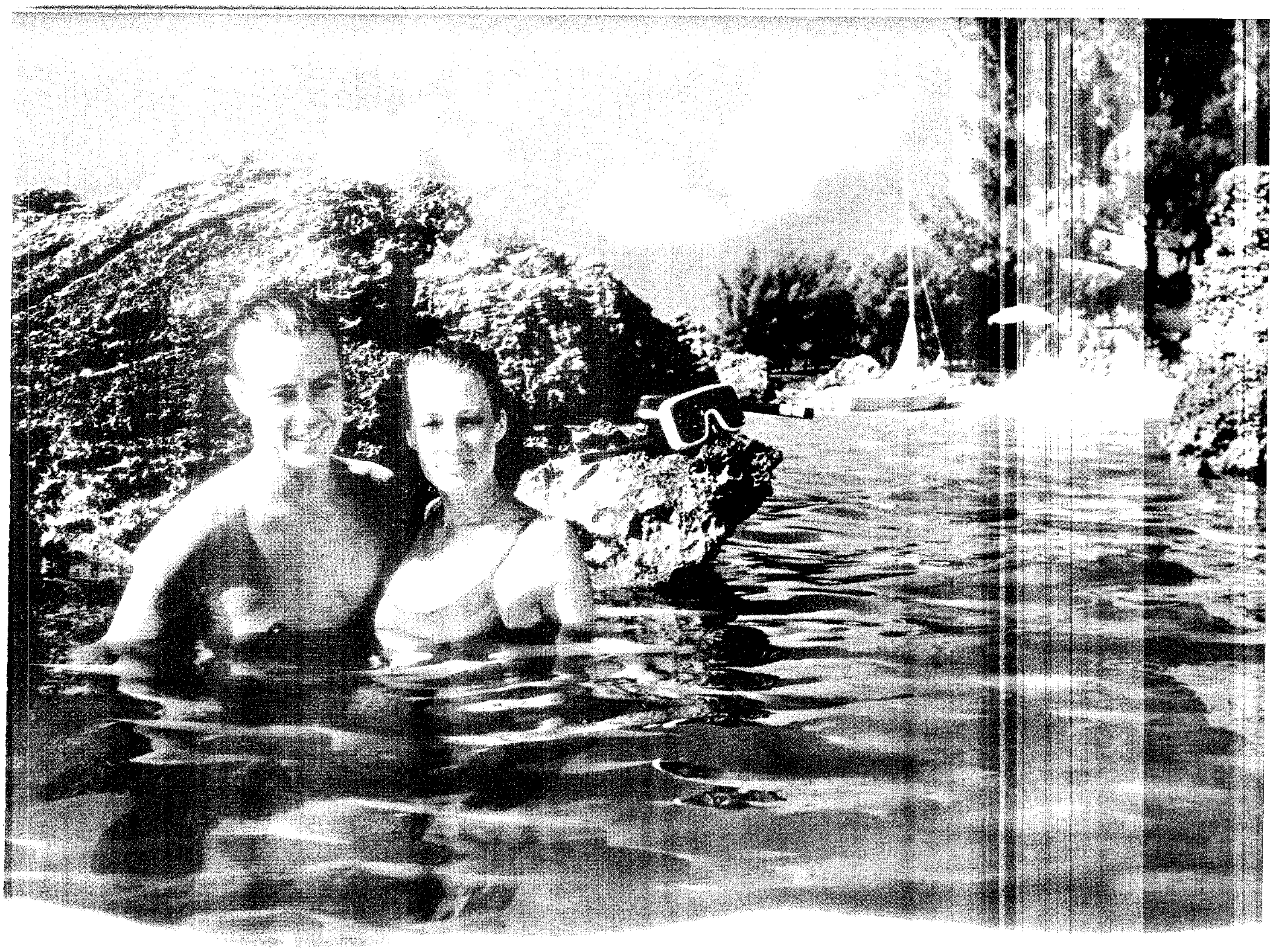
"where fifty dollars was a fortune." It is also a long way from the analyst's consulting room, although "sublimation" is a word much favored by Freudians when they discuss gambling. Appleman, however, is using it without any narrow, disapproving psychoanalytic connotations; the sublimation he is talking about is a passport to freedom from the choking constrictions of self. W. H. Auden once wrote of a young poet, "One has the impression that, on returning from a walk, [the inhabitants of his poems] could tell one more of what they had worried about than of what they had seen." Poker was Appleman's way out of worry into alertness and objectivity. When he said, "Gambling is a romance," he was not referring to the smoke-filled rooms, the sullen tribal faces, or the stilted backchat that passes for conversation; he meant the art of the game at its highest level and the romance of personal liberty.

It is a romance that mesmerizes all the high rollers. They pride themselves on the fact that they survive spectacularly well outside the system: no bosses or government bureaucrats on their backs telling them what they should do and how they should do it, no routine that is not of their own choosing, no success that is not the result of their own unaided talents. Also no failure. They are mesmerized by the romance of big losses as much as by that of big wins, and are not interested in compromise. Jack Binion told me of one old-timer who, like all serious gamblers, had been broke more times than he could count. But at the age of seventy-three he had one final lucky streak and found himself seven hundred thousand dollars ahead. Everyone—even the other gamblers—told him to buy himself an annuity policy. A hundred thousand dollars would assure him of a good living for the rest of his life and leave him six hundred thousand to gamble with. "But he didn't even consider it," Binion said. "He would rather take his chances of going broke. Which he did, and it didn't bother him at all. And, when you think about it, he was right. If you go broke here in America, you don't really starve to death. From the financial point of view, there is a far greater difference between you and some poor native in Africa than there is between you and the richest man in the world. We all eat much the same food and sleep on the same brand of mattress as the Hunt brothers down there in Dallas. This shirt of mine is



sailed to a lovely little Bermuda cove where we were the only couple."

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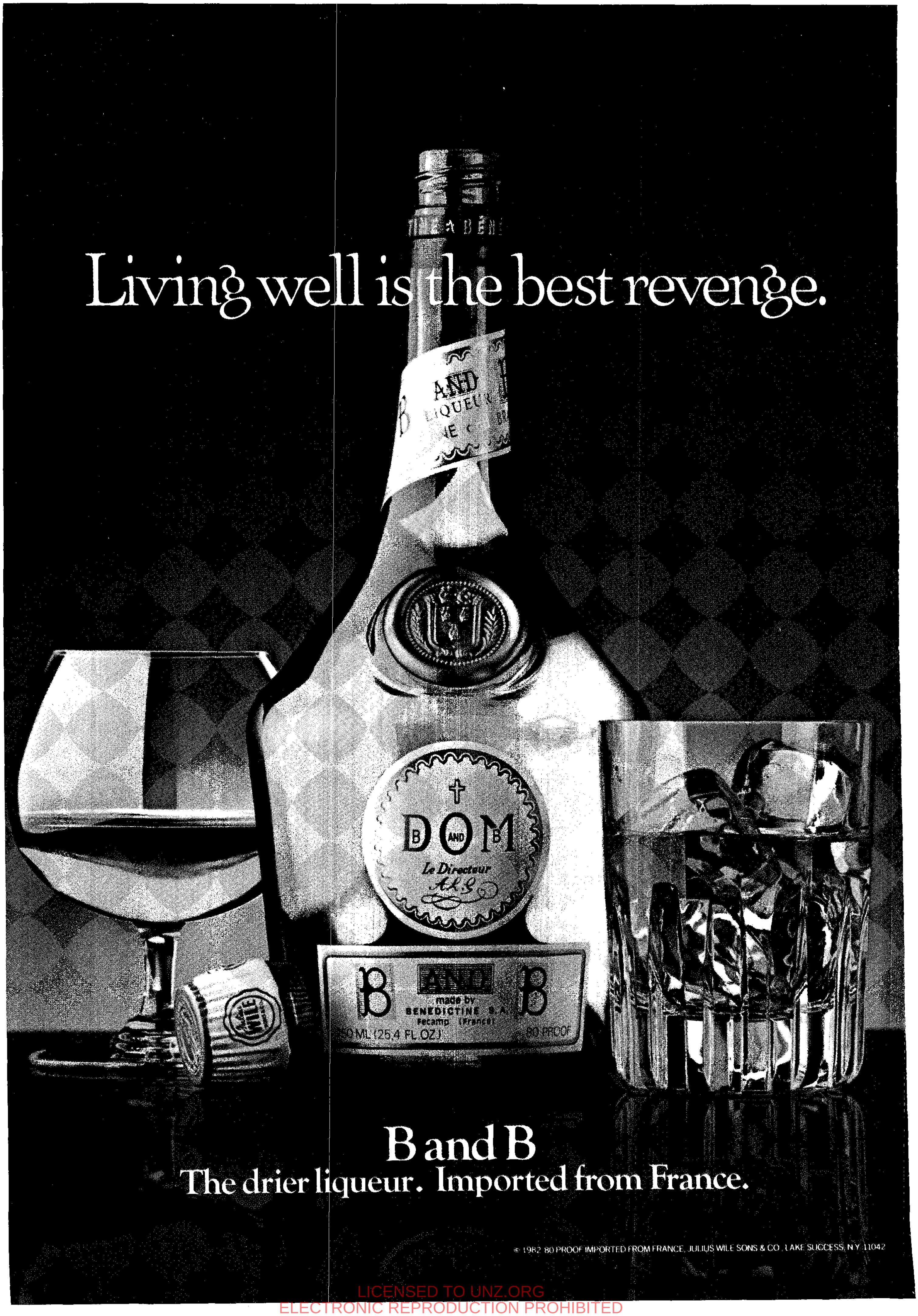
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one hundred per cent cotton, and that's all Bunker Hunt is going to be able to wear. So maybe he can take a private jet while I have to stay home. But that's no big deal. Once you reach the lower middle class in the United States, there is no great difference between the top and the bottom. Here at the Horseshoe, if these guys go broke they are going to have to play cheaper. That's the only difference."

"Cheaper?" I said. "There are fortunes changing hands every day."

Binion shook his head. He seemed disappointed in me. We had appeared to be understanding each other, but now, as though for the first time, he registered my English accent and realized that, after all, I was just another uncomprehending foreigner. "In the free-enterprise system, you have to assume that each guy is the best judge of what he does with his own money," he explained patiently. "I've often thought, If I got really hungry for a good milkshake, how much would I pay for one? People will pay a hundred dollars for a bottle of wine; to me that's not worth it. But I'm not going to say it is foolish or wrong to spend that kind of money if that is what you want. So if a guy wants to bet twenty or thirty thousand dollars in a poker game that is his privilege. Society might consider it bad judgment, but if that is what he wants to do you can't fault him for it. That's America." And that, too, is Las Vegas—the only place on earth where they justify gambling as a form of patriotism.

THE bedrooms in the Golden Nugget are supposed to remind you of the frontier days. The crimson walls are hung with prints of Wild West scenes, featuring cowboys, gamblers, and ladies of easy virtue; the crimson velvet curtains at the windows and the bedhead are tied back with tasselled golden cords; the bed itself, the size of a football field, has an ornate "GN" embroidered in gold, like Napoleon's coat of arms, at the center of its heavy crimson cover; there are lace curtains behind the velvet at the windows. But the delusion ends there. The view is of parking lots, a shabby back-street hotel for real losers, a couple of shops offering "LOANS" in letters as big as their storefronts, then railroad tracks and, beyond, the blank buff desert ringed with bluish mountains.

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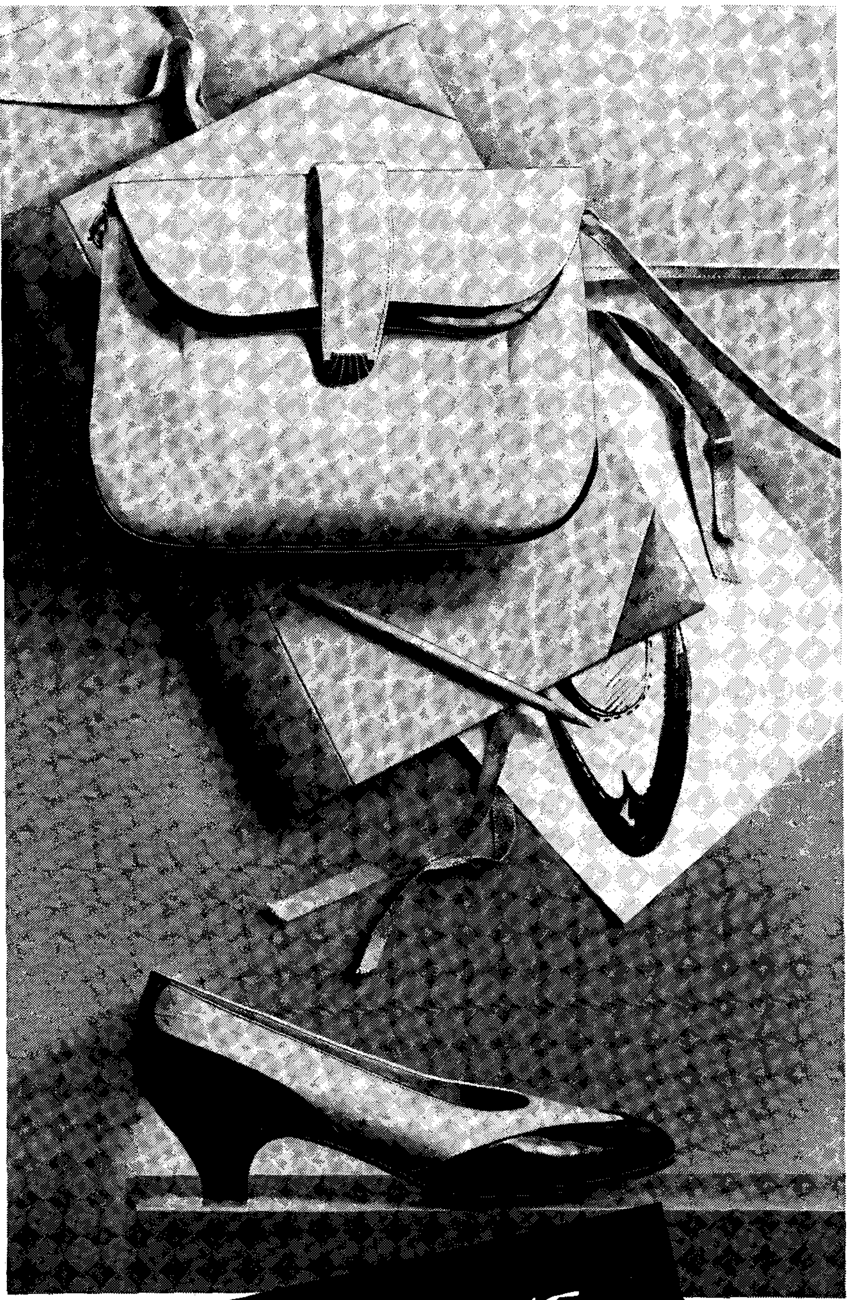

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of-doors, although the windows do not open and the hum of the air-conditioning rises angrily with the intrusion of natural light.

Downstairs is all polished mahogany and brass, fake Tiffany lamps, and the style of instant friendliness that Westerners have adopted as their own. "Hi! How are you?" calls the occupant of the room next to mine when the Oriental waiter wheels in his breakfast trolley at midday. And the waiter answers with an un-Oriental "Hi! How are *you*?"

So why does the prospect of four weeks in this pleasant hotel seem at times like a prison sentence? Because time has been annihilated in this city without clocks, because there is no fresh air and nowhere to go except the casino. By ten in the morning, the heat is merciless, and in 1981 the Golden Nugget had no pool. When I forced myself to take a walk—five blocks across to Garces, five blocks up to Eighth Street, five blocks across again to Fremont, then back past the souvenir shops to the hotel—I returned sweating, feet swollen, mouth parched, as though I had just spent a bad half hour in a prison recreation yard. After a week in Glitter Gulch, I began to exhibit symptoms of physical deprivation—nervous tension, disorientation, insomnia, loss of appetite—which seemed inappropriate in a town geared exclusively to self-indulgence.

Later, I discovered the little swimming pool at the top of the Mint, just across from the Golden Nugget and next door to the Horseshoe. Every afternoon at five, I sneaked up there for an hour and plodded up and down in the overheated water under the giant illuminated figures of the only clock visible anywhere downtown. Afterward, I lay in the harsh sun, listening to the television aerials creak in the wind, or walked the perimeter of the roof and admired the town spread out below, its signs neutralized by the sunlight, and the ring of folded mountains edging the horizon. At that hour, there were rarely more than three or four people around the pool, and often I had the place to myself except for the sand-colored desert birds hopping about among the aerials and the bored attendant waiting to close the doors at six. Silence, fresh air, physical release, and space: I felt like a prisoner reprieved.

There were other people in town who felt the same, though for different reasons. "Sure, I'm from Texas, but I cain't go back there." Tony Salinas is a heavily built, handsome man with long black hair and a slightly olive Mexican complexion. He lounged at a poker table in a break between games, very much at his ease. "I got me into a hassle with the F.B.I.," he said. "You see, I've always liked to gamble real high. I gotta flair for handicapping football games—in *1980*, I won me the World Championship N.F.L. Football Handicapping Contest—and the feds reckoned I was making a book. It warn't true, but they leaned on me all the same. When they found they couldn't hang a charge on me, they tried to get me to snitch on other gamblers down there in San Antonio, and when I wouldn't do that they got mad. They started this case that dragged on for six years. Finally, the judge said, 'Mr. Salinas, I don't want you and the F.B.I. playing cops and robbers no more. I'm going to fine you ten thousand dollars and give you five years in prison.' "

"For gambling?"

"Right. It's a victimless crime, but it ain't legal in Texas. But the judge knew that was the way I made my living, so he made me an offer. 'Pay that fine,' he said, 'and I'll give you sixty days to move yourself and your family to Nevada. Gambling is legal out there, and that's where you should be. You do that and I'll change the prison sentence to five years' probation.' 'Judge,' I said, 'I've been wanting to go to Nevada for six years, but you ain't let me leave Texas on account of this case.' 'Well, I'm letting you now,' he said. 'Just so you don't come back here for five years.' I'm no dummy. He knew I'd say yes. An offer I couldn't refuse, right?"

"*You mean he sentenced you to five* years in Las Vegas?"

"Right. I moved here on July 28, 1978, and everything's been just great for me since then. My first year, I got very lucky and won a million dollars. I ain't never going back."

Because gambling is *officially* illegal in so many other states, even the most respectable Nevada professionals often find themselves at odds with the law. On the penultimate evening of the tournament, when all the contests had been settled except the ten-thousand-dollar buy-in hold-'em prize, which decides who will be next World Champion, there was a prize-giving in the Sombrero Room. All the previous

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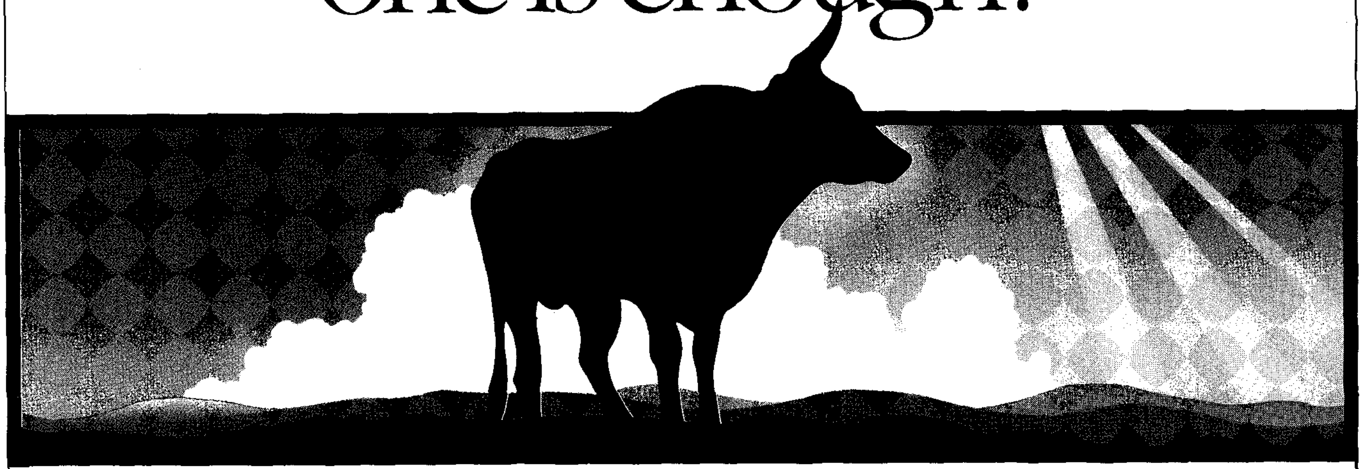

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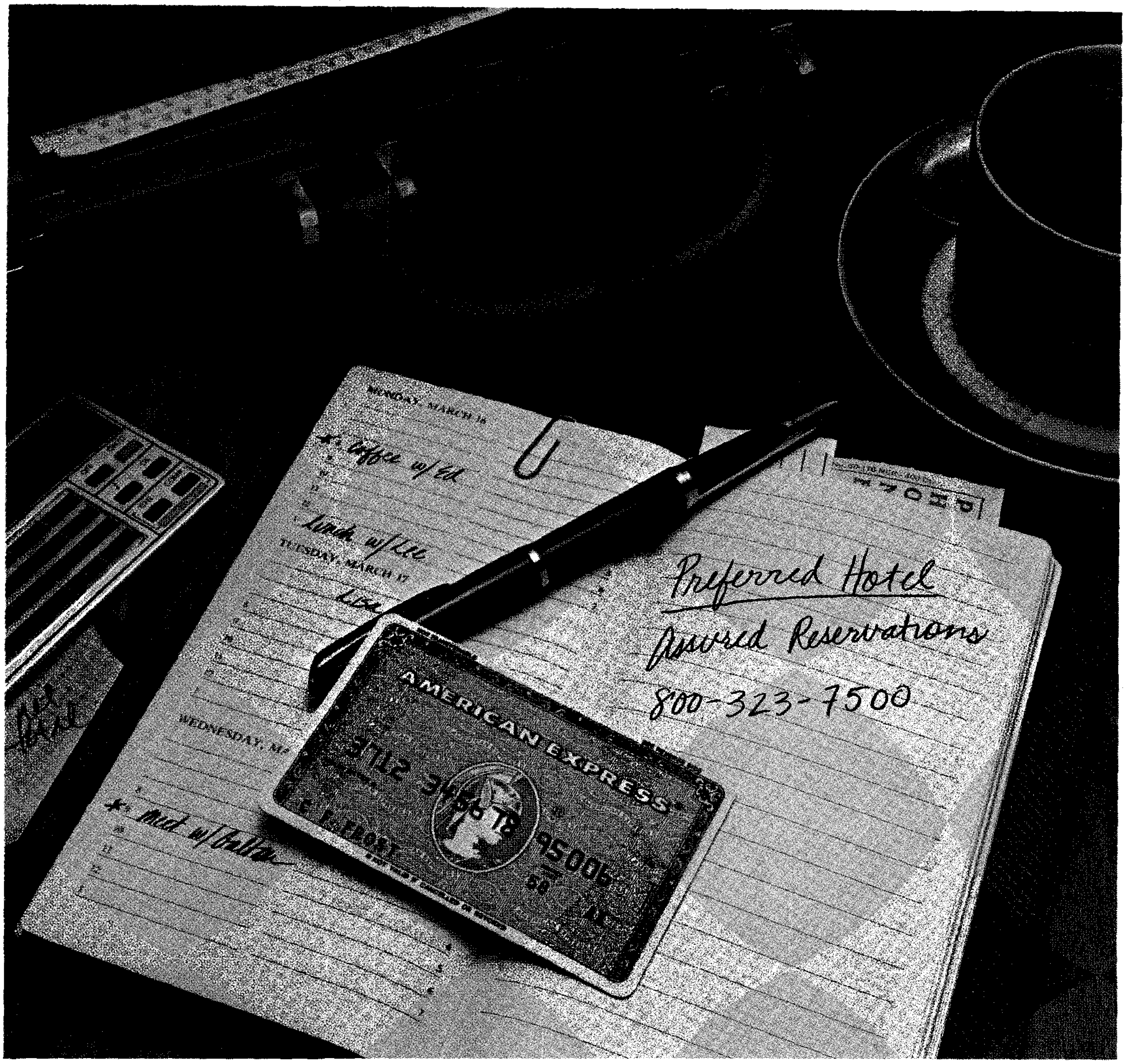

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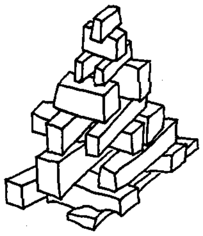
World Champions were present except Brian (Sailor) Roberts, who won the title in 1975. "Sailor can't be with us this evening," Jack Binion explained, "because he's in jail just now." The audience murmured sympathetically. Binion went on, "But don't worry. He'll be back tomorrow." Polite applause.

Byron (Cowboy) Wolford, another top player, was unable to take part in the tournament at all. Pinned to the back wall of a small annex to the Sombrero Room where poker is played away from the din of the main casino was a message from him expressing his sincerest regrets. Apparently, when Cowboy wins big he tips everyone in sight—the dealers, the cocktail waitresses, the old men who sweep the cigarette butts from the floor. The previous year, he took a spectacularly large pot in a side game and, in his elation, tipped the man standing next to him. But the man standing next to him was from the Internal Revenue Service, and he thought he was being offered a bribe. Cowboy Wolford served ninety days for attempting to bribe a government official.



Few of the poker players, however, are as headlong in their dealings with the law. They usually handle its representatives as subtly as they handle each other during the games. One of the professionals was once called before a grand jury investigating a mobster. "You know him?" he was asked.

The poker player shrugged and said, "We've played cards together."

"Did he talk to you?"

"He talked some."

"What did he say?"

"The usual things: 'Check,' 'Raise,' but mostly 'Take 'em.' "

For those who live on less exalted levels, the advice is simple: "Don't mess with the heat." In Vegas, the heat comes in many forms and uniforms, and all of it, they say, is "very heavy." The Metropolitan Police Department is responsible for Glitter Gulch, the rest of the city, and Clark County; each casino has its own private army of security men, wearing its own special uniform. In their different styles, they all contribute to the spectacle.

One afternoon, for example, there was a police-department patrol car double-parked at the corner outside the Golden Nugget. An emaciated man with cropped gray hair stood in front of it, stripped to the waist, leaning forward with his hands on the hood. His face was as lipless as a skeleton's, and he had no eyebrows. A dirty red shirt lay on the hood of the car, the contents of his pockets beside it: scraps of paper, a filthy handkerchief, a few coins, a billfold, a green comb. Two huge policemen were searching him methodically and with distaste; a third sat in the car typing information into a small computer between the front seats. All three had mustaches, beer bellies, big revolvers, and a great deal of creaking leather. One of them, grimacing, slid his hand inside the emaciated man's waistband, found something, and then—fastidiously, as though not wishing to soil his fingers—unbuttoned and unzipped the man's jeans and pulled them down a few inches. Underneath was a second pair of trousers, dirty gray. The emaciated man gave the policeman his lipless grin and shrugged helplessly. The two giants began to empty the pockets of the inner trousers: two battered billfolds and something that looked like an airplane ticket. They laid these on the hood of the patrol car, alongside the other bits and pieces and the red shirt. While this was happening, a crowd of garishly dressed tourists drew slowly closer. "Got yourself an audience at last," said one of the policemen. The emaciated man laughed ingratiatingly, ducking his head sidewise, hands still flat on the hood. The policeman inside the patrol car went on punching information into his computer. The gawking crowd closed in.

Whatever his prospects, the emaciated man was lucky not to have been picked up by one of the private armies. A thief who was caught rifling a bedroom in the Horseshoe was hauled by the guards into a room on the second floor and beaten so severely that his yells, I was told, could be heard not only in the casino but also clear across the street. The Horseshoe does not have a problem with theft.

The other casinos are more philosophical. One afternoon, I left a gold cigarette lighter by the pool at the top of the Mint, and by the time I realized that it was gone the pool was closed. Late that night, I reported the loss to the Mint's security guards, who wrote it all down in laborious detail and did nothing at all. The next afternoon, the young pool attendant returned the lighter to me; he had found it when he

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was putting the sun chairs away. But he had not bothered to inform security, and they had not bothered to ask him. Tourists come and go but good staff is hard to find.

The previous summer, I spent a weekend at one of the more sedate casinos, with my wife and two children. While I played cards, they sunbathed and swam. On the second afternoon, my wife came back to the bedroom to find all the money gone from her purse. The head of security was overweight and melancholy. "Nothing we can do about it," he said.

"It had to be someone with a passkey."

"You know how many people we got working in this place, lady? Pushing two thousand is how many. You know how many passkeys there are?"

"One of the maids barged in this morning while I was in the shower. When I opened the door, she ran out as if I'd caught her at something," my wife said. She was so angry she was having difficulty holding back her tears. She blew her nose and said, "I could recognize her."

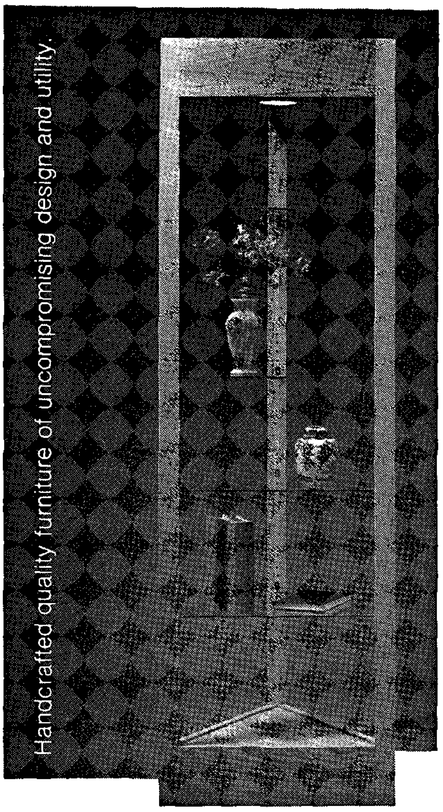
"Wouldn't do no good." The security man patted the air between them benevolently. "How you going to prove it's your money she got? Even if you left your purse lying there on the bed and hid in the bathroom while they stole it, you still couldn't nail 'em. *They call that entrapment.* Ain't nothing no good. I've known guests here, they hide their diamonds in the toilet tank and lose 'em all the same. Anything valuable, you take it with you or deposit it at the front desk."

My wife blew her nose again. "It's outrageous."

"Sure is." He nodded placidly. "But you got insurance, right? So let's you and I fill in a report and you claim it all back."

The guard was unruffled, and not just because he was bored and powerless. He knew that sooner or later everything finds its way back into the gambling economy: jewelry, cameras, lighters, pens, as well as money. All of it gets sold or pawned, then comes back as chips or small change in the slots.

"Las Vegas is like a parasite that feeds on money," said a man from Texas. "It sits here in the middle of the desert and produces absolutely nothing, yet it supports half a million people. It depends on the rest of the United States to feed it money, which it channels through the casinos to those five hundred thousand people. I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guess it's a kind of modern miracle, something like the loaves and the fishes. I see the casinos packed with tourists telling themselves they are having a good time losing their money, and it's beyond my comprehension. Yet they're always full."

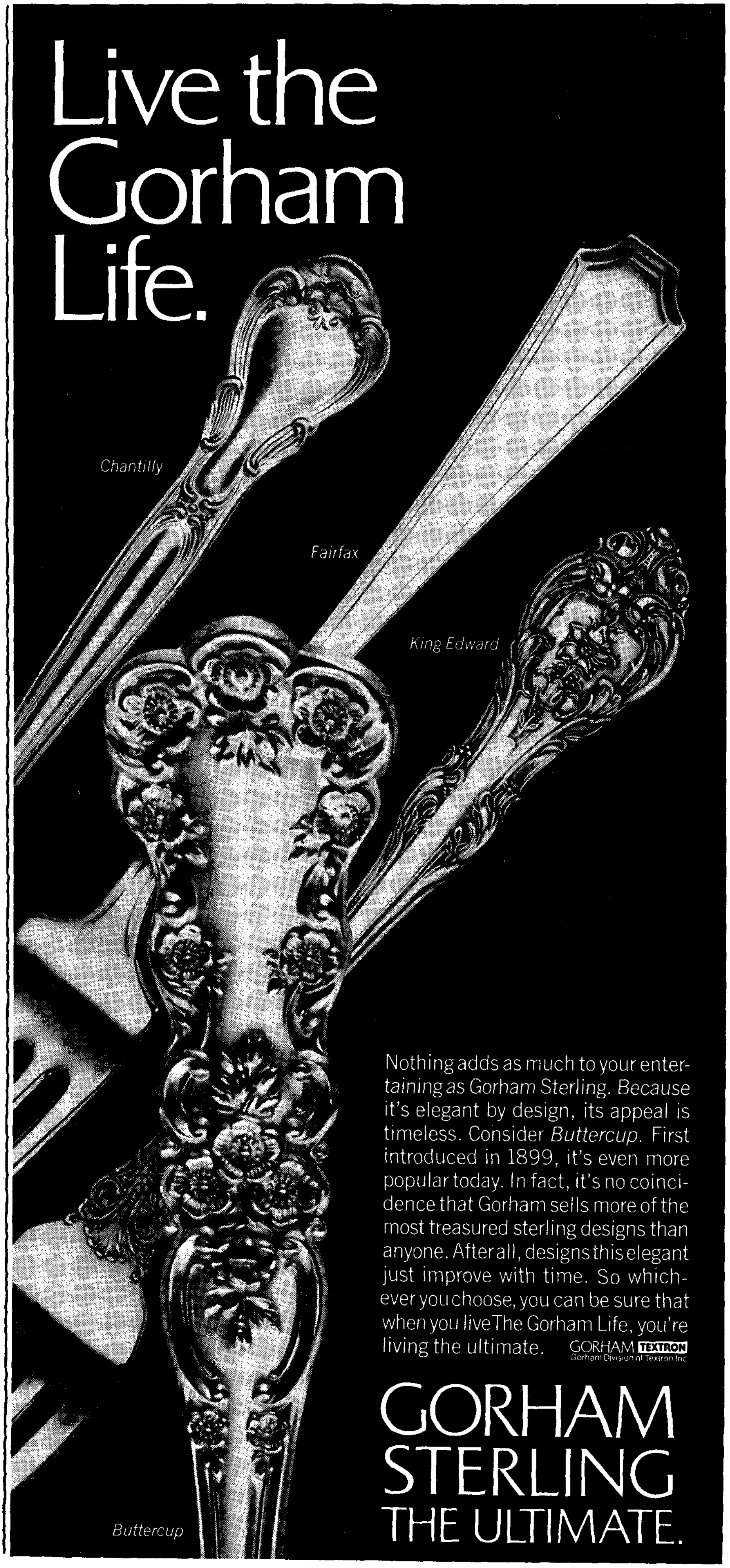
"And you continue to come."

"Poker is how I make my living. And I approve of the location. The desert cuts Vegas off from the real world. You have to make an effort to come here, you have to have money to lose. If the casinos were in a metropolitan area, the people who couldn't afford to lose—construction workers, taxicab drivers, housewives, mail clerks—would gamble because the opportunity was there. In Vegas, suckers are suckers by choice. Without them, there wouldn't be a gambling economy." He glanced at his watch and rose to his feet. "Time to play." He paused, glanced at me quickly, and looked away, as though embarrassed. "Still, I'd hate anyone to think I was bad-mouthing the old place."

IN the first years of the World Series of Poker, everything about the occasion was amateur except the players. Word went around, although no one was actually invited, and the events were not even scheduled. "If seven seven-card-stud players arrived at the Horseshoe at the same time, they'd play the seven-stud contest—provided one of them wasn't asleep," Eric Drache told me. Despite the haphazardness, the event grew steadily, and after five years Jack Binion asked Drache to organize it for him. "I don't take a fee," Drache said. "Jack has done me so many favors I could do this for the rest of my life and still be in his debt. Anyway, I like organizing things."

Now a schedule is sent out a couple of months in advance to a mailing list of players all over the world; there are thirteen separate events; a public-relations firm from Los Angeles issues daily press releases, and they are regularly picked up by the wire services; television cameras film the highlights of the main events; even the London *Times* and *Observer* carry the results.

Meanwhile, the players keep on coming. By 1981, the number of experts willing to put up a ten-thousand-dollar stake to compete for the title of World Poker Champion had grown from the original six to seventy-five. There were hundreds of aspirants for the other titles, and still more who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came to the Horseshoe simply for the side games that are played day and night while the tournament is in progress.

By late afternoon on May 5th, the end of the second week of the World Series, only two players remained of twenty-seven who had anted five thousand dollars each—plus a fifty-dollar buy-in for table time and dealers—to enter the seven-card-high (limit) World Championship. Johnny Moss, Doyle Brunson, Puggy Pearson, and Stu Ungar had all been eliminated on the first day. Other big names, including Chip Reese, had followed them during the second morning, and only Eric Drache and A. J. Myers were left for a final showdown under the inhumanly bright lights set up by the television crew.

The contestants' appearance suggested that they had reached a secret agreement to stage the game as a confrontation between the East and West Coasts. Myers' gaudily-patterned shirt was open halfway to his navel, showing gray chest hair and a heavy gold chain around his neck. His straw hat with the wide scarlet band printed with white flowers was tilted at a rakish angle, his half-glasses were perched on the end of his nose, and he was chewing a gigantic cigar. A second cigar, wrapped in cellophane, lay on the table beside his stacked chips. Drache, in contrast, was a model of Eastern discretion: subdued sports jacket of herringbone Harris tweed, Viyella shirt, sober woollen tie. He looked more like an Oxford don than like a gambler. He also looked bored.

"I feel I'm anteing myself to death," he had said to me a couple of days before. "If they made a film of my life, half the footage would be of my hand throwing in ante after ante after ante. As if it had a life of its own, like Dr. Strangelove's. And every ante is one step closer to the grave. O.K., I'm winning at the moment, so it's easy to enjoy it, because I can kid myself that I will use the money for something more interesting than poker, like travel. But I won't, of course, and I wonder where this is going to end. I'm never going to have a job now. I mean, who is going to pay me three hundred thousand dollars a year? I'm at the top of my profession, and there aren't many opportunities at the top. I'd probably be good in public relations, but I'm not prepared to start at the bottom and work my way up—even if I had the qualifications. So poker is my only security. Some secu-

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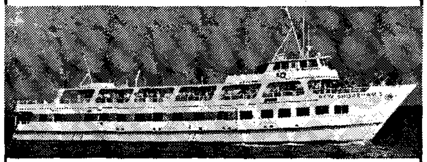

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rity—though Johnny Moss is a great inspiration: in his mid-seventies, still playing every day, and still winning. Even so, I'm thirty-eight now, and I wouldn't want to think my next thirty or forty years are going to be spent in a poker game. I've already been playing professionally for twenty years. In the same game, really. I mean, how long is a poker game? If you play for a living, there is no end to it. Just because it breaks up doesn't mean it ends. The players may go away, but they are still thinking about it, replaying hands, working out their strategy. And they'll be there again the next day. Them or someone else.

"It's utterly unproductive. You can't even carry on a conversation. The losers say, 'Shut up and deal,' and anyway how much input can there be with guys who play twelve hours, then go home and sleep? What's happened to them? What are they going to talk about? Their dreams? A few years back, there was one old guy, a regular, who didn't even know there was a war on in Vietnam. That's why we all enjoy it when someone comes in from out of town. But we don't get many of them, because the game is too high.

"So we have our family of Vegas professionals. Part of the tension of the game is not created by the size of the stakes; it's a family tension, a terrible intimacy. It's like being stir crazy, doing time with the same seven guys in a cell day after day. If someone told me I had to go to the Horseshoe and play for forty-eight hours straight, I'd wonder what I'd done wrong that merited two days in jail. You're just stuck there. There's nothing to see, and, for me, there's not even that much interest in the game anymore. I've seen it all before. Everything that could happen has happened: I've fallen asleep in the middle of a deal; I've played an entire hand without being dealt any hole cards. I've not yet had a guy die on me at the table, though others have. Apart from that, you name it, I've seen it.

"I would willingly pay a hundred dollars a day to have a news ticker go by, so I'd have something to occupy my mind. As it is, I try to manufacture interest. Sometimes I pick up my cards and look at all three at once. Sometimes I squeeze them very slowly to keep myself in suspense. Sometimes, if I'm drawing to a flush, I arch them up so that the upper card reflects on the back of the lower; then I can tell whether it's black or red and narrows my chances down to even money. Anything to alleviate the boredom. I look at every pretty girl who passes, and every well-dressed guy. That's not good for my poker; you're supposed to concentrate. But I'm so bored I do it anyway."

Drache had been tired that day, after a long poker session constantly interrupted by people bringing him problems about the tournament and its organization. The voice of the switchboard operator intoning "Telephone call for Eric Drache, telephone call for Eric Drache" was a continual ground bass to the din of the casino. He was probably also tense about the imminent seven-card-high competition, in which his professional reputation would be at stake. But now he had made it to the final showdown, and he seemed bored again, despite the occasion, despite the money involved, despite the overwhelming competitive urge to win. When all was said and done, it was just another poker game.

Drache and Myers lounged nonchalantly in their chairs and made jokes to each other sotto voce. The television producer fussed around them irritably, trying to create the impression of seriousness and strain he considered appropriate to the worth of the chips—a hundred and thirty-five thousand dollars—divided between them on the table. He gestured to the camera and sound men to close in on Drache. Drache grinned at the tournament's floor manager, an old friend from the game in New Jersey. Speaking clearly for the benefit of the microphone probing the air above his left shoulder, he said, "If I lose two pots in a row, Frank, call time out." Then he ducked down, took a Kleenex from a box beneath the table, and wiped his forehead. The television producer signalled brusquely to his cameraman to switch to Myers.

Drache leaned back and said to me, "In the last year, I've spent more time with A.J. than I have with my wife."

Myers nodded cheerfully, while his wife and his odalisque daughter, sitting behind him, smiled their approval.

Drache was probably not exaggerating. He and Myers seemed to know each other's game so intimately that they might as well have been playing with all the cards exposed. Drache bet on an open pair of aces—a very strong hand—but when Myers raised

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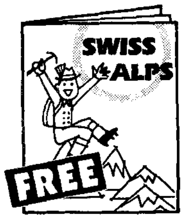

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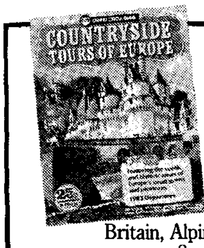

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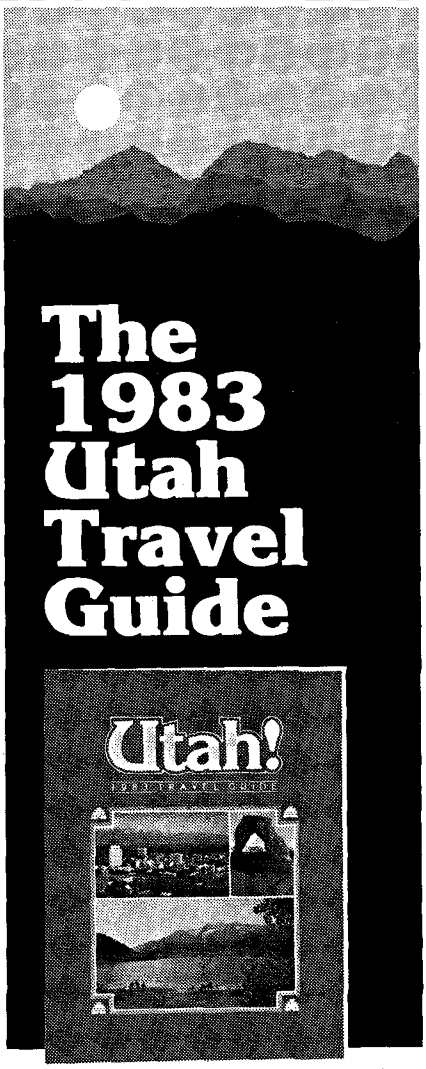

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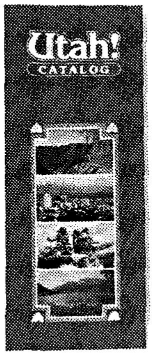

him back, showing nothing higher than an eight, he folded immediately.

"Pity," said Myers, and turned over his hole cards: two more eights.

"Surprise, surprise," said Drache.

The cards were not running for Drache, and Myers was "on a rush," hitting hand after hand, as if by magic. There was nothing Drache could do except endure it stoically, retrench, risk nothing, and hope that his chances would come before the antes ate him up.

"It's a war of attrition," he said. "And it's costing me seven hundred and fifty dollars a hand." But he did not seem perturbed.

In seven-card high, each player is dealt two cards face down at the start and one card face up. According to Vegas rules, which were drawn up to promote action by getting the players committed to the pot, the low man brings it in—that is, the player with the lowest exposed card has to bet. Three more cards are then dealt face up, with a round of betting after each, initiated by the player with the highest exposed cards. The seventh card is then dealt face down, and there is a final round of betting.

For six consecutive deals, Drache was forced to bring it in, Myers raised immediately, Drache folded. Myers half turned to his wife and daughter and the railbirds massed behind them. He arched his eyebrows, turned out his palms, and said, around his cigar, "This man plays poker for a living, would you believe it?" Drache laughed along with everyone else, but was not taken in: he knew better than anyone else that the wisecracks were a form of pressure, keeping him on the defensive.

Finally, Drache won a hand. "Watch it," he announced. "I'm on a rush." He won the next hand, too, but then began folding again.

"End of rush," said Myers.

For two hours, the game dragged on uneventfully, and then it flared briefly to life for one hand. On the sixth card, Drache was showing a nine, a deuce, and a pair of fours, and he had two more nines in the hole, giving him a full house. Myers was showing a jack, a seven, and a pair of fives; he had a second jack in the hole, giving him two pairs. But when Myers bet after the seventh card Drache did not raise him. Correctly. Myers' last card was another jack, giving him a higher full house.

After that, it was only a matter of time before Drache was frozen out—

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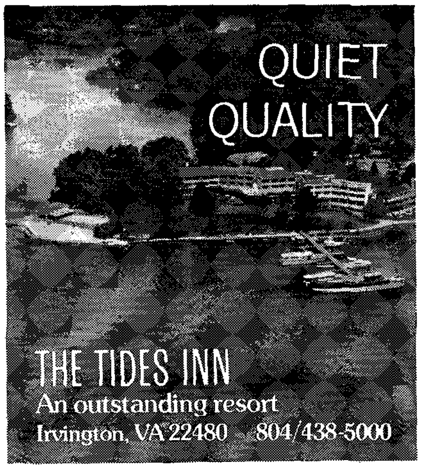

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“like Broomcorn’s uncle,” as they say in Texas, chewed up by the antes. Twenty minutes later, he “went down the river” (took all seven cards) on an open-ended straight, nine to the queen, and did not make it. Myers took the hand and the championship with aces up. His prize money was sixty-seven thousand five hundred dollars, Drache’s twenty-seven thousand dollars.

Within a couple of hours, they were facing each other again across the poker table, but for much higher stakes than were allowed in the official championship.

THE writer Mario Puzo, who loves Las Vegas, thinks that three days is the ideal time to spend in the town. If you get lucky sooner, get out on the next plane, since the casinos make their billions of dollars of profit out of one simple certainty: nobody stays lucky.

Puzo plays casino games in Vegas—baccarat, roulette, craps, blackjack—where the house’s edge, the less than one to sixteen per cent permanently in its favor, will always eat up the gambler in the long run. Poker, even in Las Vegas, is a less one-sided struggle. Although the casinos either charge an hourly rate for one’s seat or cut a small sum from each pot, the real money changes hands between the players. That is why most of the poker rooms are off to one side, away from the main action; the managements do what they can to discourage high rollers from losing their thousands to a poker player instead of throwing it off at craps or roulette. That is also why the poker professionals are the only gamblers who seem to survive the town, provided they can avoid the temptation to destroy their winnings in other, less predictable forms of gambling.

Most of them, incidentally, are banned from the blackjack tables; the casinos assume that if they can play poker at the highest level they either must have a photographic memory for cards or can easily master one of the counting systems by which the blackjack player is able to beat the odds. Eric Drache, for instance, was barred the first time he tried to play the game. He knew nothing about it but was betting heavily, because that is how he always bets. He had lost five thousand dollars in less than an hour, and then the shift changed. The new pit boss recognized him and immediately stopped the game. “This man gambles

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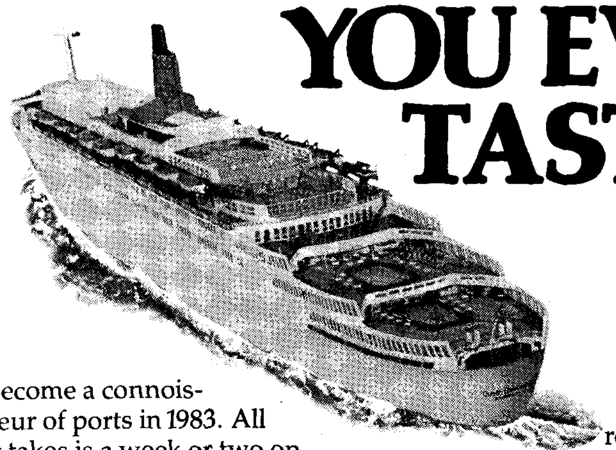

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for a living," he said. "He can't play here."

"He didn't know I knew nothing about the game and had no chance of winning," Drache told me. "But that was fine by me. It gave me the opportunity to ask myself what I was doing there anyway. I've never played blackjack since."

The poker professionals also survive because they spend so much time in Vegas that they are impervious to seductions that outsiders find hard to handle: the seduction of the action that never stops, and surrounds you wherever you go (there are girls in miniskirts and plunging décolletages selling keno tickets in the restaurants while you eat and at the poolside while you sunbathe, and, in fact, *everywhere* except on the tennis courts and the golf courses); the seduction of the movie-star image that the casinos project onto their guests (the suites of rooms with vast, draped beds, sunken baths of fake marble, twin dressing tables, his and hers, with lights all round the mirrors, just like the makeup rooms in a Hollywood studio); above all, the seductive fantasies of power, stoked high by the fantasies of money and chance.

An example: Joel first arrived in Las Vegas four years ago. It was also his first visit to America, and he was there—like thousands of other Englishmen in that brief interlude when the pound was strong and the dollar weak—because America had unexpectedly become the ideal place for a cheap family holiday. So Joel, his wife, and their two children did the grand tour: they admired the view from the top of the Empire State Building and the imperial glories of Washington; they drove across the Golden Gate Bridge, visited Disneyland and Universal City and Sea World; they spent a weekend in Las Vegas; they gawked at the Grand Canyon; and then they homed with relief onto the Fontainebleau Hilton in Miami Beach. In Vegas, they stayed at Caesars Palace, and while his wife and children swam, Joel played a little blackjack, a little poker. Since he also played regularly and competently in London, he got out of town without having done himself much harm.

Joel had one peculiarity: at home in the evenings, he never read, he never talked, he never even watched television; he just sat, staring at nothing in particular, puffing a Groucho Marx cigar. "Maybe he was plotting how to sell another dress," said a friend. "For a chap in such a small way of business,

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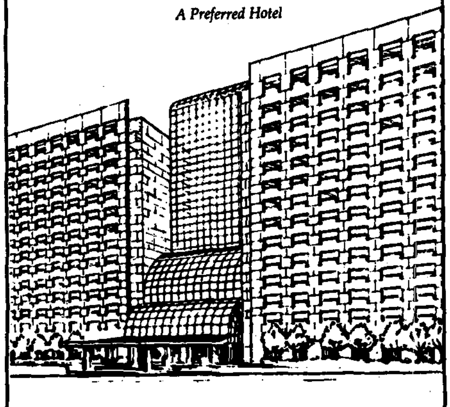

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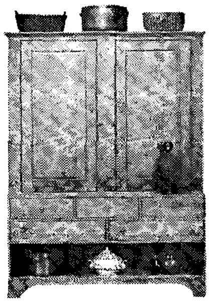

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CONNECTICUT CUPBOARD, circa 1780-1790

he did O.K." Perhaps. But more probably he was letting his fantasies spin, for Joel was cursed with a childish imagination and the inability to distinguish its workings from reality. To anyone who would listen, he invariably reported large poker losses as small wins, small wins as fortunes. He lived in a world of make-believe, presumably because the real world gave him so little to boast about. Since his teens, he had worked in the garment trade for a domineering father, who had forced him, at the age of twenty-one, into an old-fashioned arranged marriage with the daughter of a business acquaintance. A year before the American holiday, Joel had finally broken free and set himself up in a small business of his own. The holiday, in fact, was to celebrate the first anniversary of his successful independence.

A childish imagination in a middle-aged body is the ideal formula for what the writer John Gregory Dunne called that "idiot Disneyland with lights"—Las Vegas. Over the years, in London, the only time Joel ever went to the theatre was when Frank Sinatra was in town to give one of his special performances. He booked months in advance and took his wife, both of them dressed to kill. He always had a couple of spare tickets to sell, at a modest profit, over the poker table. Sinatra was singing at Caesars Palace during Joel's weekend in Las Vegas, and Joel, his wife, and their children sat there enthralled two nights in a row. It seemed to him an obscure sign, a portent: "Las Vegas, Las Vegas, you're my kind of town." Like was calling to like, and continued to call irresistibly during the months of married wrangling after Joel and his family returned to their dreary suburb. He had raised a little capital for his new business, using his home as collateral, so, for the first time in his life, money was not a problem. He even began to do well in the London poker games, at which he had for years been one of the "providers." The siren call of Vegas became stronger. In November, he returned.

But Joel had not spent all those years of hard graft in the rag trade for nothing. He wanted to go back in style, and he also wanted to go back with the least possible expense to himself. So he arranged a twenty-thousand-dollar line of credit with Caesars Palace. "Not to gamble," he said. "Just to play poker. But in that town you've got to have status." Naturally, the hotel treated him as it treats any

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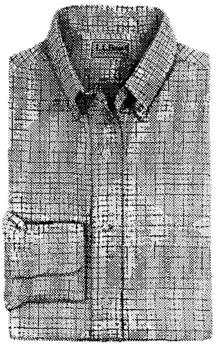
customer who indicates that he has a respectable amount to lose: like a king. He was provided, free of charge, with an elegant suite—a circular bed, sunken bath, drinks on the sideboard in the sitting room, a bird's-eye view of the swimming pool. He was bowed to, smiled at, coddled, and flattered, wined and dined with the compliments of the management, and was befriended by an obliging lady. This was a man who had spent his whole adult life with a woman with whom he had scarcely exchanged a civil word, let alone a civil touch, and who was still too terrified of his father ever to risk being caught out in an affair. No matter that the Las Vegas woman was large and rawboned, with peroxide hair and spangles on her glasses, the fifth of eight children of a security guard from Texarkana; she treated him as regally as everyone else at Caesars Palace did, feigned enthusiasm, and knew how to make him feel manly after a lifetime of subjugation and worthlessness. Belatedly, he discovered the pleasures of sex. He went around in a daze, watching her greedily and with wonder, as if she had just invented the wheel. His fantasies spun more dizzily than ever. At the age of forty-six, he had finally, he decided, fallen in love, but with the desperation of middle age, knowing this might be his last chance. He bought her a hideous gold bracelet and a blue Pontiac Firebird and asked her to marry him. She refused, of course, but in such a way as to leave the door ajar, since a good mark is hard to find—particularly in Las Vegas. Worse still, the confidence she gave him rubbed off at the poker table; he came out winning a few hundred dollars, he claimed, and that meant he did not lose much.

And it finished him. He went back to London, left his wife, and set himself up in an apartment he could not afford. He telephoned the girl in Las Vegas every day and sent her five hundred dollars a week, so that she would not need to work. She shared the money with her pimp and continued to do business as usual. Two months later, Joel returned, hoping to make money at the tables. He lost. Once again, he asked her to marry him; once again, she refused. "At least change your job," he pleaded. "Go to dealers' school. I'll pay." His doggedness exasperated her, but she was not a bad-hearted girl. "Joel," she said, patting his thin hair gently, "you peddle schmattes, I peddle sex. *That's* my job."



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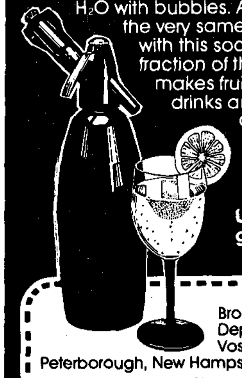

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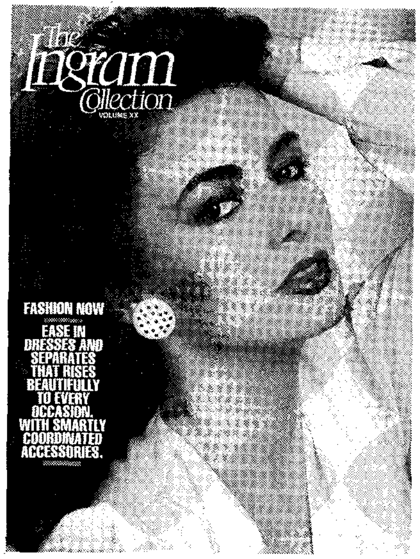
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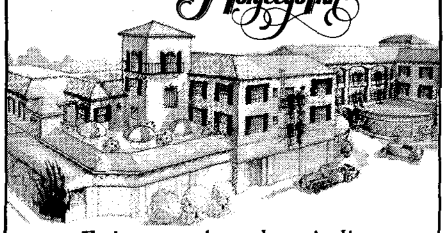

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Joel flew back to London, sold what was left of his business, returned to Las Vegas, found another blond hooker—this one from Lubbock, Texas—and went through the whole performance again. He also kept on losing, although all he could talk about was his broken heart. It was pure Vegas magic: in less than a year, Joel had been transformed from a walk-on uncle in a bad comedy into a tormented Dostoevskian, weeping helplessly on the sofa while his whore tore up banknotes and threw them on the fire. He seemed curiously elated by the role, high on his own disasters. He embraced Vegas as the early Christian martyrs embraced their gridirons: it was his fate, his justification, his fantasy of fantasies. Back in London again, he boasted about his misfortune, claiming he had been set up by the mob: when they heard of his credit at Caesars, he claimed, they sent the girls after him and took a hefty percentage of the money and presents he showered them with. When the girls held back, he added, they were given cement overcoats and dumped in Lake Mead.

Then Joel himself disappeared, trailing bad debts, including an unpaid telephone bill for seven hundred and fifty pounds for calls from London to Las Vegas. Nobody thought to blame the mob. He is rumored to be in Johannesburg, but his wife, who has remarried, is not convinced.

As a fantasist transfixed on his own imagination, Joel was doomed from the start both by the town and by the game. "There can be no self-deception for a poker player," Mickey Appleman told me. "You have to be a realist to be successful. You can't think you've played well if you lose consistently. Unless you can judge how well you play relative to the others, you have no chance." Another reason Joel had no chance was that he was unable to disentangle his gambling from his sex life. This is not a muddle that the professional players ever allow themselves. Nearly all are married to women who, with varying degrees of difficulty, have made their peace with the problems of living with an addict: the vacillation between feast and famine, the long absences while their husbands are on the road, "driving the white line" from game to game, or the different, more complex absence of someone who is physically present while his whole attention is elsewhere. "It takes a special sort of woman to handle marriage to a profes-

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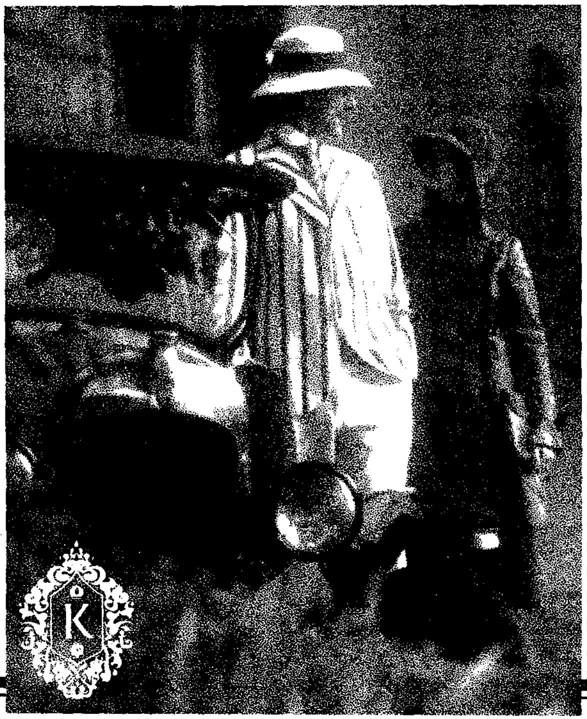

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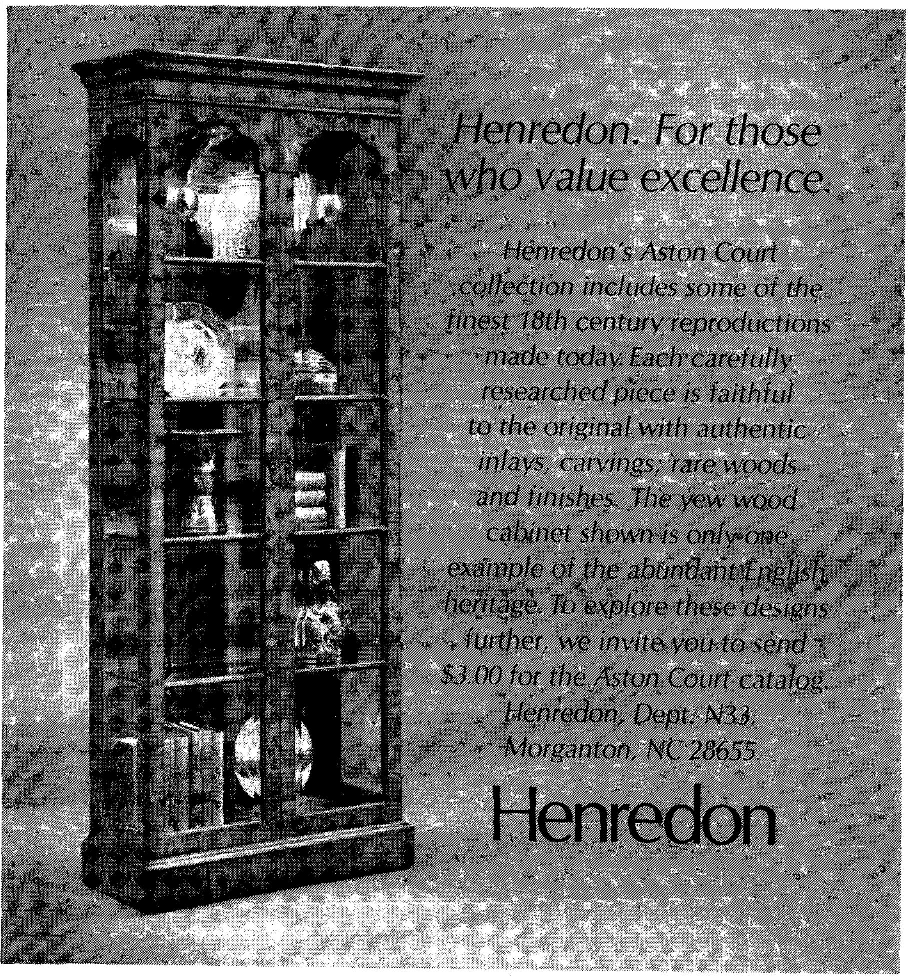

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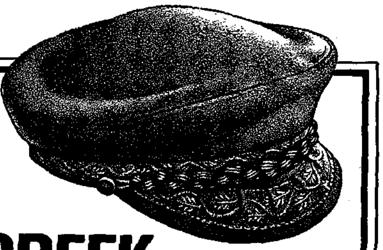
sional poker player," Bobby Baldwin once said. "She has to know she can't change him. She marries him the way he is, with certain habits, certain things he's accustomed to, and she has to learn to live with them." Baldwin is usually as sensitive and delicate as a young girl in his attitude toward people, scrupulously polite, scrupulously modest, but on this topic his voice was as steely as it was at the poker table, without a flicker of apology. "As I see it, if a man is not allowed to live his life the way he sees fit, then he's with the wrong person. You can't sacrifice your life just because someone gives you a me-or-it ultimatum. And that cuts both ways, of course. I've been married twice. I loved my first wife very much, but she just couldn't cope with the life style of a gambler. Shirley, my second wife, seems to like it. I was very lucky to find her."

Shirley Baldwin is a small-town version of Jacqueline Onassis: bouffant hair, round face, small features, a diamond as big as the Ritz. Like the other wives, she sometimes watches her husband play in important games, sitting glumly through the long hours of monotony and stilted conversation, ready to smile encouragement or respond to a private joke when something like that is required, as patient as a nun and as devoted. But more often the wives keep away from the casinos, carrying on with their lives and their families as if poker were just a profession like any other. Virgie Moss and Louise Brunson keep an eye on the family investments and the day-to-day finances, worry about the children, make sure their husbands have clean laundry and proper meals, and never ask about wins or losses but know how to be appreciative or sympathetic, as the situation demands. Some of the younger wives are, predictably, less bound by the traditional domestic role; Jane Drache, for instance, is studying for a B.A. at Columbia, and her husband has seen to it that she is financially secure in her own right. "I want our marriage to be based on our relationship, not on money," he said. "She can leave me any time she wants, and it won't be a monetary decision." But the Draches are New Yorkers among the Texans, exceptions in a world of old-fashioned male bravado. "Women's all right," says Amarillo Slim. "Only place in the world you can beat one and not get thrown in jail is at the poker table."

Whatever part the wives play, they provide their husbands with a base, a



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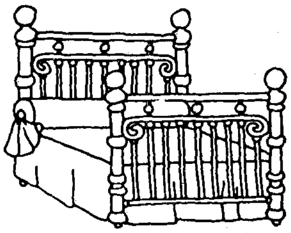

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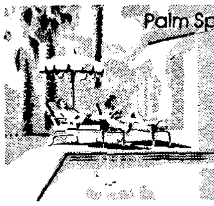

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stable point in a notoriously shifting world. "Family and wife and kids give you a foundation," Bobby Baldwin told me. "They give you the motivation to be strong and solid, to have backbone, heart, fortitude, or whatever you want to call it. They give you a purpose in life. Without that, it would be hard to control yourself in this business, because if you had no responsibilities what would it matter if you won or lost? I myself get a big kick out of spoiling my wife and family—and that includes my parents, my grandmother, my brothers. Some of the guys out here know nothing but the gambling world. Well, that's all right, except I think they miss out on the best part of life. Me, I stop to smell the roses."

Mickey Appleman, too, stops to smell the roses, New York style; that is, he reads a great deal, practices meditation, thinks hard about his life and what he is doing with it. On the subject of family, he agrees with Baldwin, but wistfully and from the other side of the fence. "A lot of the guys have someone to go back to," he says. "That security is a source of strength in poker; it helps them win. Me, I'm single. When I finish playing, I go up to my room and, like, I'm alone with myself. So, in a way, it's harder."

Yet Appleman is alone by choice, since, as even Joel discovered, there is no shortage of friendly women in Vegas. The high-stakes poker games always have their groupies loitering at the edges, attracted by the aphrodisiacs of big money and risk. But the atmosphere at Binion's during the poker tournament, despite all the din and razzle-dazzle and tough talking, is strangely sexless. For a month each year, the place becomes a world of men without women. Or, rather, the women are there but—except for the few who sit down to play the men on equal terms—only as color in the background, like the voice of the hotel operator over the intercom or the rattle of chips. There is no trace at all of the sensual charge that usually bristles in the air of a holiday resort. The women who do connect seem to spend most of their time listening morosely to passionate but obscure accounts of how some freak tried to run a bluff with a pair of sixes: "I mean, what's two lousy sixes?" The women smile and nod and glance furtively around for relief.

One evening, I was in the elevator of the Golden Nugget with a tall, middle-aged cowboy with the aquiline profile and fierce beard of a Spanish

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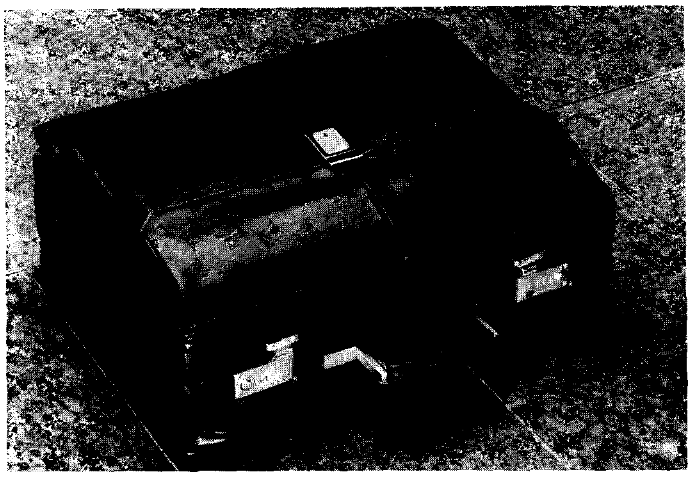

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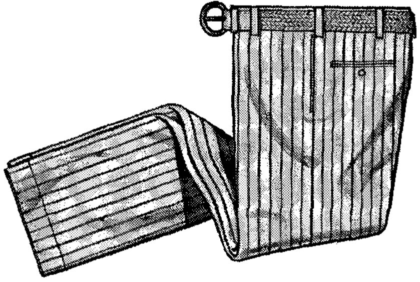

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conquistador—a man who that afternoon, in true conquistador fashion, had been destroying the nonprofessional hold-'em event. I had seen him seated unmoving behind two gigantic towers, one of black hundred-dollar chips, the other of gray five hundreds capped with three blacks. Each tower was over a foot high and perfectly symmetrical, rising from a base of three chips set side by side. They looked like giant space-age architectural fantasies built in Lego by a patient child—appropriately, patience being what the game is about. But the tournament was over for the day, and now the cowboy was ascending majestically to his room with an Anita Loos blonde in a low-cut pink dress and very high heels, who held a drink in one hand, a cigarette in the other. She hummed "Nowhere Man" to herself and smiled vaguely while the elevator rose and he analyzed for me a key hand I had watched him play. He seemed utterly unaware of her. "When he raises in an early position," he was saying, "I have to read him for nothing better than ace-jack." The elevator stopped, the doors slid apart. The blonde started forward, then hesitated. He raised his hand like a traffic cop, pressed the button to hold the doors open, and continued, "Two aces, two kings, ace-king, he'd have sent it around in the hope of getting in a reraise." Then he moved courteously aside, bowing slightly to the girl as she stepped out in front of him. As the doors closed again, he took her silently by the arm to guide her down the hall. A couple of hours later, when I came down after a nap, the girl was drinking alone at the bar of the Golden Nugget and he was playing poker again across the road at the Horseshoe.

The little old-fashioned courtesies (he was, after all, a man in his fifties), the silence, the firm, businesslike hand gripping the girl's elbow and guiding her to his room were all part of a formal exchange: sex without sensuality, without even much interest; sex bought as one might buy a drink—as a way of winding down after the tension and concentration of gambling, as a hunger to be assuaged, like other hungers, for a fixed price.

Brothels are legal in Nevada, and sexual hypocrisy is the one vice that Las Vegas has never aspired to. At the bus stops along the Strip, there are give-away newspapers offering every variety of playmates, of both sexes. The bordellos and the call-girl agencies ("No need to leave your hotel

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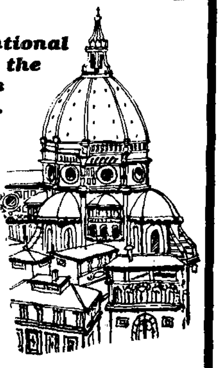

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room") take full-page spreads with blurred, stylized photographs, credit-card logos, and dreadful double-ententes: "The perfect way to climax your stay in Las Vegas." There are also columns of coy personal ads for free-lancers with names like Sherri, Terri, Lori, and Desarya. A topless bar just off the Strip not only has dancing girls to cater to most tastes—one fat, one thin, one tough, one yielding—but also offers to customers who can no longer manage the four steps up from the parking lot to the bar a ramp for wheelchairs. There seems no end to the depression induced in the name of pleasure by the entrepreneurs of Clark County, Nevada, and it spreads outward, to professionals and nonprofessionals alike. "I feel that the women here have been hardened," Mickey Appleman said. "They're not vulnerable, like the women back East. It's like they've had their insides stripped out. I guess it's tragic in its own way, but this town is hard on everybody. It strips away your spirituality. In order to be successful on a continual basis out here, you have to remain nonemotional. But when a gambler is nonemotional, then he becomes detached from the person he really is. That's the basic problem of living in Las Vegas: you become despiritualized."

Despiritualized, depersonalized, one-dimensional: that is how life in any Disneyland must always be. But during the World Series of Poker the atmosphere at Binion's Horseshoe is as unwavering and concentrated as that of an Olympic training camp. I have never seen so many apparently healthy men gathered together in one place for so long with such single-mindedness: no sex, no drink, just the turn of the cards hour after hour and the little thrill of excitement and expectation at each new deal. —A. ALVAREZ

(*This is the first part of a two-part article.*)

•

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[*From the Wall Street Journal*]

Flu outbreaks in many areas lift the slump for druggists.

As the bug bounces back from last winter, which was the mildest flu season in six years, so do sales of certain antibiotics and other drugs. Flu-drug sales are up more than 25% from last winter at a Payless Drug Stores Northwest outlet in Lewiston, Idaho. "Sales have picked up beautifully this winter," says a Minneapolis pharmacist, "and we're loving every minute of it." A druggist at Countryside Pharmacy in Omaha reports a rise in repeat sales. "People," he says, "can't seem to shake their colds or flu this winter."

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Talentless Trash

HOW little we can be sure of in this world! Only a few days ago, I would have predicted that no play would arrive on Broadway this season more insulting to the intelligence of an audience than "Whodunnit," but then "Moose Murders," which would insult the intelligence of an audience consisting entirely of amoebas, arrived for a one-night sojourn at the Eugene O'Neill. To make matters worse, it happened to be trash of the same irritating nature as "Whodunnit," in that it attempted to find humor in making fun of the classic form of the murder mystery. In "Whodunnit" we are shown a big house somewhere in the green English countryside filled with an assortment of peculiar characters, at least one of whom is a murderer; in "Moose Murders" we were shown a big house somewhere in the green fastness of the Adirondacks filled with peculiar characters, at least one of whom was a murderer. The only praise I can bestow on "Moose Murders" is for the set, by Marjorie Bradley Kellogg. It was sufficiently authentic to render all the more disagreeably inauthentic every twist and turn of plot that took place within its walls. Arthur Bicknell, the hapless author of the play, called the house Wild Moose Lodge, which I find characteristic of his literary slovenliness; how many tame moose does he number among his acquaintances? Be that as it may, ten men, women, and children find themselves milling about in shrill panic under the dripping eaves of the lodge (for, of course, a thunderstorm is raging, the telephone has gone dead, and the lights are constantly flickering on and off). I will take care not to describe all ten, though I may just mention in passing that, again characteristically, the author appeared to find it hilarious that one of them is a human "vegetable" in a wheelchair, bandaged from head to foot, and another is a blind man, who is intended to provoke our laughter by his maladroit habit of tripping heavily over every object in his path.

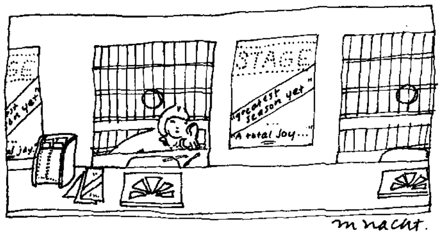
In a play that manifested not a scintilla of talent, what could be expected of its cast and director? As far as I could judge, only Nicholas Hormann was making a serious effort to act; everyone else was playing charades with what I imagine to have been the lassitudinous encouragement of the director, John Roach. The costumes in "Moose Murders" were from the hand of John Carver Sullivan, the lighting was by Pat Collins, and a category of professional prowess hitherto unknown to me, listed in the program as "stage violence," was credited to Kent Shelton. Whatever such violence may be, it isn't a patch on the violence I felt in my heart as this rubbishy work fumbled and stumbled its way to a sorry close.

—BRENDAN GILL

OFF BROADWAY

Quartermaine

QUARTERMAINE, of "Quartermaine's Terms," is a teacher in a school in Cambridge, England, whose attention has been so corroded by loneliness that at times he appears to be half-witted, although he is no more bubble-headed than most of his colleagues. In the play, which opened last week at the sparkling new Playhouse 91, the British dramatist Simon Gray, without breaking his usual admirable stride or changing his admirable style, has written his own Chekhov comedy, in which each character is so preoccupied with his private concerns that he rarely hears what anyone is saying to him. Like other plays of Mr. Gray's—"Butley," for example, or "Otherwise Engaged"—"Quartermaine's Terms" is a study of a peculiar kind of selfishness or self-absorption, in which neither greed nor lack of sympathy has any part. Appallingly tactless questions, in the guise of social chitchat, are asked of everyone, but the askers rarely hear the answers, which is one of the many jokes that run through the evening. The mood is comic from beginning to almost end; the underpinnings are not. The story takes place over three years at the Cull-Loomis School of English for Foreigners, an institution run by two elderly men who have been lifelong lovers. At the opening, Quartermaine (very well portrayed by Remak Ramsay) is alone and seated in the comfortable armchair at stage right which could be his nest. The other teachers enter one by one. There is a beautiful woman, married to a man who is having an affair with someone on the staff of his literary magazine; an aspiring novelist, unshaven and red-eyed, who soon bursts into sobs because his wife has left him; a new, part-time teacher, whose name no one ever gets right, and who has torn his trousers in a bicycle accident (he is extraordinarily accident-prone throughout—another running joke); an assistant principal, seemingly more compos mentis than the others, who has a daughter on the verge of a nervous breakdown; and, finally, an embittered spinster, who reports on her mother's decline into spiteful senility following a stroke. Most of them are mediocrities, but they do make social plans for weekends and end-of-term holidays. Quartermaine is always alone. (One question that is never quite answered is why. Quartermaine, at least as Mr. Ramsay portrays him, is certainly a personable fellow—God's own extra man, one would think—yet he doesn't seem able to book a colleague for dinner, or even for the theatre.) There is conversation about enrollment, and there are jokes about the students; well-bred English incompetents at the mercy of bustling, clumsy, self-assured foreigners is perhaps the deepest undercurrent of the play. But Quartermaine is our immediate concern; he becomes ever more forgetful, muffing his classes and then skipping them altogether. When he is told at the end that his services are no longer required, his "Oh, Lord" is about as sad a line as one can imagine.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Loneliness is the killer, and Mr. Gray examines every aspect of it, even the self-inflicted kind. Time after time, we are given clues to the nature of Quartermaine's reveries: all by himself, as usual, he whistles "Let's Face the Music and Dance" while doing a dreamy approximation of Fred Astaire; out of the blue, he asks about the legs of someone's unknown *fiancée*; and, almost casually, he tells the beautiful teacher, who is in tears, that her feelings mean more to him than anyone else's. The acting, under Kenneth Frankel's direction, is good—especially that of Caroline Lagerfelt as the beautiful teacher, Roy Poole as the fussbudget principal, Anthony Heald as the young part-timer with contusions, and Dana Ivey as the spinster

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who is probably a matricide. One quibble: those theatre tickets of Quartermaine's, for either "The Cherry Orchard" or "Uncle Vanya," are a needless signal; we know what the dramatist is up to without his nudging us. But that is the only quibble. I thought I could not bear one more play (or novel) about English school life or about British characters who may be meant to personify the decline of Britain, but Mr. Gray has pulled off "Quartermaine's Terms" very well.

SAM SHEPARD's marvel "The Tooth of Crime," which I first saw ten years ago at the Performing Garage, has now been revived at La Mama Annex, in a production that is totally different from that one. There is a stunning double-decker setting, which has a rock band on its lower level and, above, where the action occurs, a room with black walls and floor and a black leather couch at center. The story concerns two male figures who may or may not be singers, one an aging fellow called Hoss—garrulous, emotional, and savagely temperamental—whose "territory," which includes Las Vegas, is threatened by the other leading character, a young punk called Crow. Much of the first act is taken up with preparations for the arrival of Crow, as his girl, a disc jockey, and a "doctor" who supplies cocaine and injects heroin come to attend him. At the end of the act, we hear Crow singing in the band and, in the murky light, see his hands waving, his fingernails sheathed in metal claws. The second act is the fight for power between Hoss and Crow. Crow is icy and taciturn and jeering, half of his face painted green and much of his body covered with paint, too. The contest is conducted entirely in words—the men never touch each other—and a referee on roller skates calls the rounds. Crow is the winner, and the play ends (echoes of "True West" here) with an attempted exchange of identities, Hoss offering his turf for Crow's gelid nature. The contest is the heart of the play, as the men try to dominate each other with contrasting images and rhythms—Hoss throwing out "Storyville," "King Oliver," "cat house," "Professor" like talismans, while Crow counters with a rock-and-roll patois that is all but unintelligible.

The performance at La Mama is fierce and threatening, and the plot holds firm in scene after scene, but much of the play goes by the board, drowned in the deafening music.

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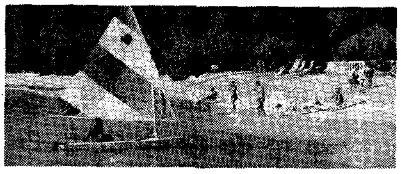

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Checking over my impressions of that other production, in 1973, I find that I described "The Tooth of Crime" as "a comedy with science-fiction trimmings," and thought that it was about, among many other things, the nature of fantasy as well as power, and the end of romance as exemplified by the Old West. Its most important elements seemed to be its satire and its mystery and, above all, the glorious language and tongue-in-cheek humor of our most audacious, imaginative, eloquent, and vigorous dramatist. But the play isn't funny anymore, although even now, with the shift in emphasis to what is serious (if inaudible) in the script, much remains; the strength and menace are more than enough to hold the audience, even when laughter is in short supply. The acting could be better, although Ray Wise (Hoss), Jodi Long (his girl), and John Nesci (the disc jockey) do well. That stunning set was designed by Bill Stabile and lighted by Paul Mathiesen; the effective costumes were by Sally J. Lesser.

HIGH-TIME DEPARTMENT: "Upstairs at O'Neals'," which has been running for months, and which I finally got around to last week, is a charming, good-humored, and spirited little revue of topical sketches and topical songs, performed by four young actresses and two young actors. The words and music and the sketches that go with them are by an assortment of hands, including those of Martin Charnin, who doubled as director. Among my favorite numbers are a lament by a man who, we slowly realize, was the hapless late drama teacher of the intractable Morales (the Priscilla Lopez character) in "A Chorus Line;" a kaffeeklatsch quartet sung by a Mrs. Barnes, a Mrs. Simon, a Mrs. Rich, and a Mrs. Gussow, proud mothers all (of the many attempts to be funny about theatre reviewers, the only one I've seen that truly is funny); and a Gilbert and Sullivan soap opera. The show is billed as a satiric revue, which it isn't—the only try at satire that I noticed was a number about the cynical use of child models for sexy commercial purposes—but it is clever and impudent. The nimble and gifted cast I saw (there have been replacements since the opening) was composed of Neal Klein, Kathryn McAteer, Douglas Bernstein, Bebe Neuwirth, Carole Schweid, and Sarah Weeks. Musical direction and arrangements by David Krane.

—EDITH OLIVER

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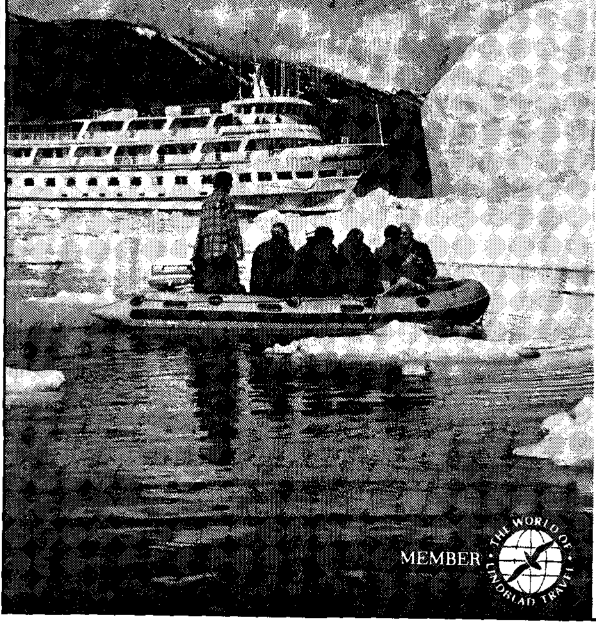

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DANCING

Choreographer Under Balanchine

WHEN they were unveiled last fall, the New York State Theatre's new proscenium and enlarged orchestra pit were very welcome by-products of the extensive acoustical renovation that had just been carried out. They really seemed to make a difference. The lowered proscenium—it had been dropped to a level some fifteen feet below the topmost ring of seats—sharpened the stage's focus and seemed to enliven the human scale of the performance. The musicians, no longer made to sit under the stage, projected a more balanced sound. But these changes quickly became unnoticeable. They didn't produce a new look or a new sound; they only corrected long-standing weaknesses, and one adjusts more quickly to comfort than to revelation. The renovated theatre was celebrated on opening night of the winter ballet season with a joint performance by the New York City Ballet and the New York City Opera. Each company did scenes from its repertory, choosing composers held in common. "Vienna Waltzes" inspired the two most effective transitions. Peter Martins waltzed Karin von Aroldingen through the Lehár episode, and singers followed with numbers from "The Merry Widow," using the same set—Rouben Ter-Arutunian's "Maxim's." In the last-act trio from "Der Rosenkavalier," the two women trailing in panniered skirts across the darkened stage paved the way for the entrances of the women in white in Balanchine's setting of the "Rosenkavalier" waltzes. The acoustical adjustments mattered less to the ballet than to the opera. If there cannot always be perfect orchestral sound at the ballet, there should at least not be noise. That house curtain that used to rise and fall with a sigh, like a freight elevator, has been silenced. But the First Ring's capacity as a whispering gallery has, if anything, been enhanced. I was sitting there for the "Rosenkavalier" scenes, and there was a sibilance all about, like—yes, ladies' skirts across the grass.

Peter Martins' appearance in this gala was the last I saw of him as a dancer all season. Ib Andersen took over for Martins in "Orpheus" as well as in "Apollo;" Joseph Duell took over for him in "Stravinsky Violin Concerto," "Robert Schumann's 'Davidsbündlertänze,' " and "Union Jack;" Sean Lavery and Adam Lüders did his other roles. A back injury and the pressure of his mounting duties as ballet master—besides supervising the bulk of the rehearsals and the casting, he put on two premières—kept Martins backstage. Toward the end of the season, he several times partnered Suzanne Farrell in "Tzigane," but I missed him and saw Andersen instead. A dancer like Martins does not easily pass out of the mind's eye. It is only now that the season is over that I realize how seldom he danced. Perhaps had his replacements been less vivid I would have missed him more. But the only bad patch was Andersen slithering up to Farrell in "Tzigane," and he wasn't actually bad; it was just that only Martins succeeds in justifying the presence of a partner for Farrell in this ballet. From what Martins says about "Tzigane" in his recently published book, "Far from Denmark" (Little, Brown), it's clear why. "Tzigane," created for the Ravel festival, in 1975, was originally to have been a solo for Farrell, with some girls coming in at the end. Martins felt he hadn't been given enough to do in the Ravel festival, and he was eager to impress Balanchine with his desire to work. He shot his way into the ballet. (He quotes himself telling Balanchine, "It's O.K., I'll come in with the girls and sweep the floor . . . Don't worry, it will be good.") In effect, Martins shoots his way into "Tzigane" every time he enters; it takes that kind of frightening conviction to be effective in the role, and one can only surmise the weight of calculation that went into Balanchine's fashioning of the male role, based on Martins' desperate need to take part in what was—and still is—a tour de force for Suzanne Farrell. It makes sense that if he could perform only one role in the course of the season, it would be "Tzigane."

The drama of "Far from Denmark," which was written with Robert Cornfield, is made of a succession of little crises like "Tzigane," in which Martins confronts Balanchine. The resolution comes when Martins persuades Balanchine of his seriousness as a dancer and his willingness to belong to New York City Ballet and believe in the value system it represents. (Martins had previously passed another crisis, agreeing to sign with American Ballet Theatre and reneging at the last minute.) The book ends with Martins, now a choreographer as well as a principal dancer, regularly and more or less happily turning out pieces under Balanchine's supervision and summing up what he has learned so far. Because Martins takes himself for a disciple and because he began

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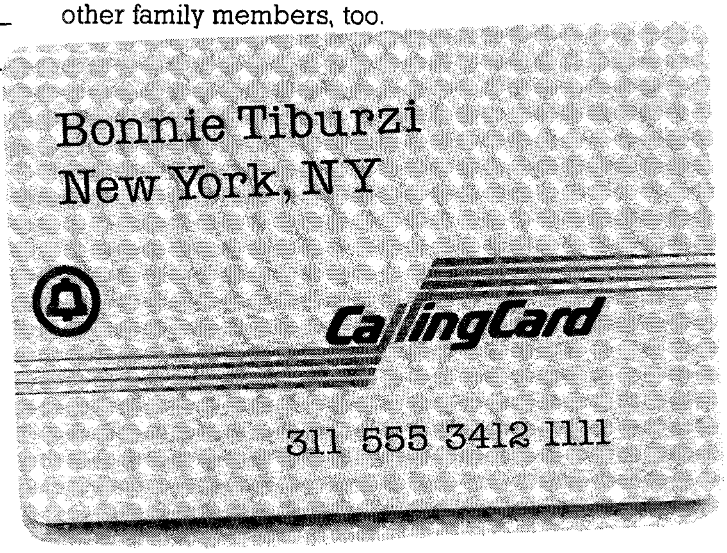

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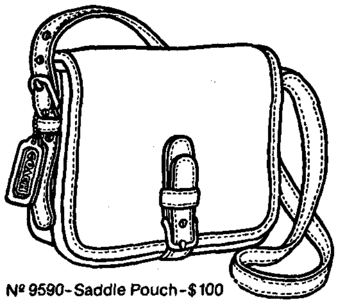
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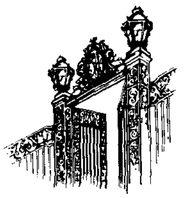
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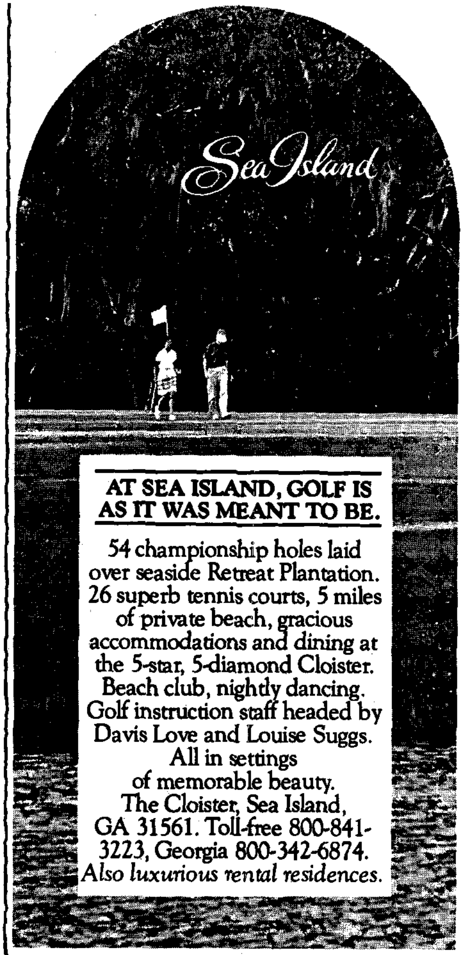
his discipleship at a relatively mature age, he has much to tell us; "Far from Denmark" becomes the first book on record to describe the growing pains of a choreographer under Balanchine. It is also worth reading for other reasons, of course. Martins is good company. The book's "voice" is remarkably unguarded, and as it ranges over a variety of personal and professional topics, seemingly holding nothing back, we may be reminded of another voice—August Bournonville's, in "My Theatre Life." Martins—candid, generous, gregarious, inquisitive, yet firmly in control of himself and his views—sounds a lot like the paternal Bournonville. Perhaps it's the Danish temperament, but he even strikes notes of moral severity, not unlike the reformer Bournonville:

> But when I choreograph I search for what is really right, what is the best and clearest and most truthful. I avoid any big applause-getting moments unless they are required, I avoid imposing any extraneous effects, and I get furious when the dancers start acting up in my ballets.
>
> I see that I've become outspoken about my profession, for now I feel some real urge that comes from my deepening commitment to dance, to see that standards are raised. I want to make dance a better-functioning profession, both artistically and organizationally. I am sick and tired of this pathetic inadequacy I am seeing: *I'd* like the audience to be alert to fakery, I want inadequate and weak ballet masters axed if they can't cut it.

Martins seems pretty sure that he can cut it. His confidence is seen, too, in the fact that he never feels a need to explain or defend his choice of dancing as a profession. He lived in a country that thinks nothing of letting little boys grow up to be dancers. Not only that—there were musicians and dancers in his family. He had the benefit of training from childhood at the Royal Danish Ballet school, and for years he won ballroom-dance trophies on the side. (That explains his special prowess in "Vienna Waltzes.") Martins brings the immensity of this cultural background to his job as ballet master. He has an institutional understanding of what it takes to make dances and dancers; he doesn't have only his own career to draw on. In this respect, he's so far ahead of any American choreographer of his generation that it's indecent; only Baryshnikov, at Ballet Theatre, has comparable authority.

But none of it would matter if he didn't also have talent. After the production of "The Magic Flute," first for the School of American Ballet and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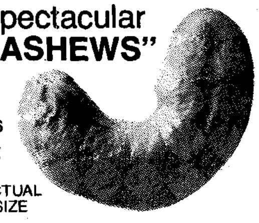
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then for the company, I think there can be no doubt of Martins' talent. It was this piece, a reconstruction of the 1893 Drigo ballet, that won him the appointment as ballet master. It was danced again this season, with a largely new cast, and for the fusty kind of thing it is it came up as crisp and fresh as new lettuce. Even the fustiness was fun. Last year, Martins made the Stravinsky "Concerto for Two Solo Pianos" for Heather Watts—his best choreography for her—and showed what he could do with a right-up-to-the-minute contemporary subject on a large canvas: in this case, sexual tensions in an overcivilized society. Neither of these ballets is a masterpiece, and neither of his new ballets is, either, and it may be that Martins will go along in this gratifying fashion for some time, showing "what he can do"—showing flashes of brilliance, even—but not making a great deal of difference to the art of choreography. That is not a bad prospect. Martins' work has been essentially investigative, and one feels his compulsion to work through a phase until certain questions have been settled in his mind. So far, watching his work and guessing which questions are unsettling him this time has been fascinating. It is unlike Martins to mistake the measure of his material. But in "Delibes Divertissement," the first of his premières this season, he got off on the wrong foot and never produced the ballet he seemed to have set out to make. I think he may have underestimated the fantasy of the Delibes music (selections from "Sylvia") and what it takes to maintain a grip on it. Balanchine's Delibes ballets look like breezy tossed-off affairs, but they—"La Source" in particular—contain a tough core of thought. It's in these impalpable little "filler" ballets of his that Balanchine's mastery is most elusive. Martins tries to create some substance for his dancers (Watts and Jock Soto) in the pas de deux and succeeds only in making pointless fancywork. He avoids clichés in the ballerina's variation (the famous pizzicato one) but in doing so turns it into another string of pitfalls for the dancer. How, Martins must have been asking himself, did Mr. B. create so much interest in such bland music? How, indeed. You sense Martins' relief the minute he gets away from this deceptive blandness and into the more exotic portions of the score. Soto and four girls have a number (Pas des Ethiopiens) that Martins handles with

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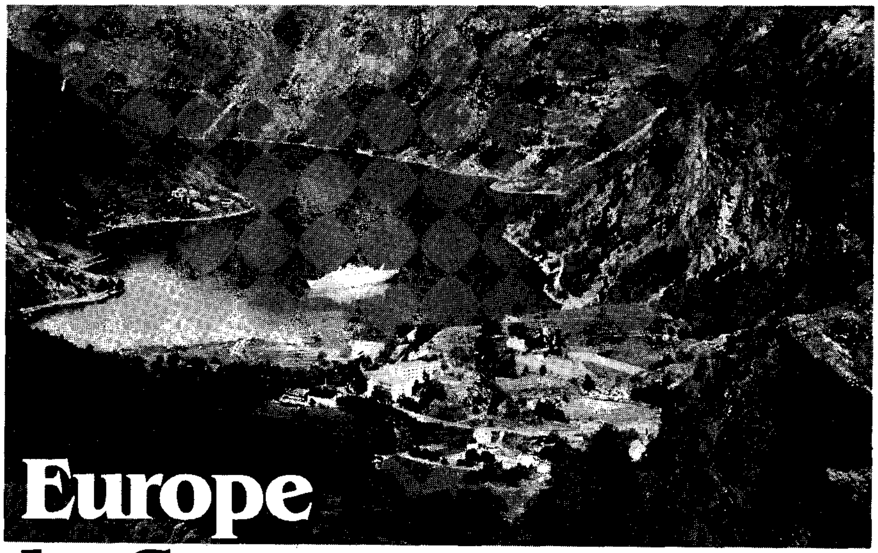
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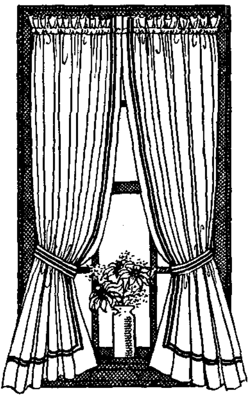

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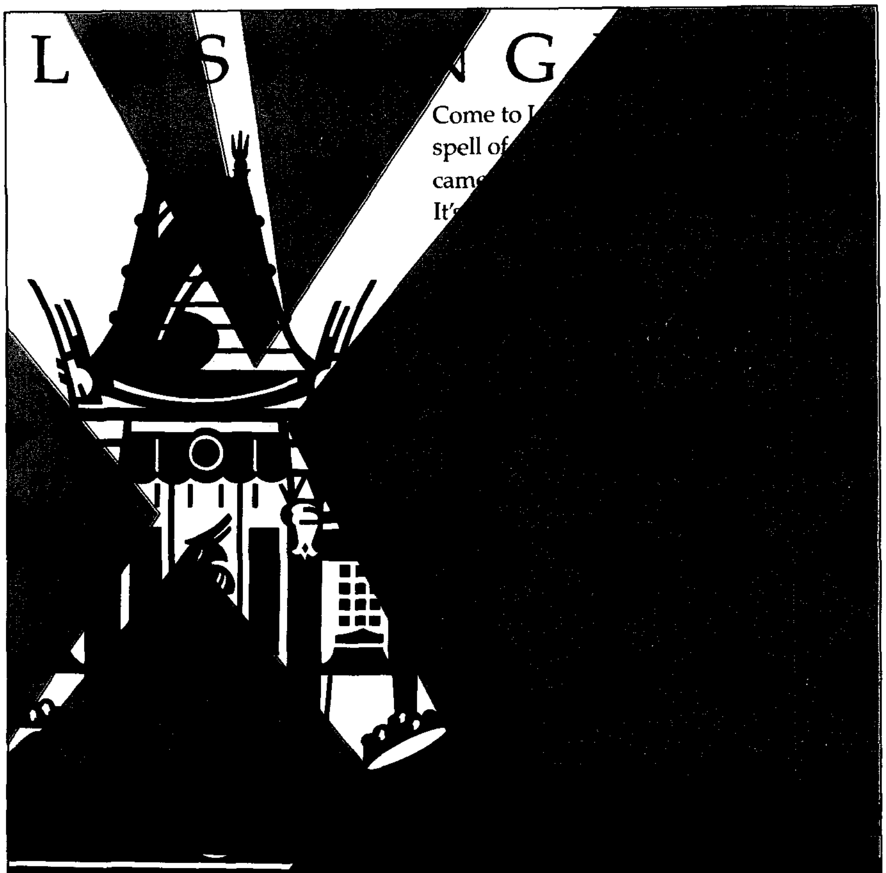
little dartlike touches of character color, and things come alive again in the coda, which has some of the bacchantic surge of Balanchine's "Walpurgis Nacht Ballet." "Delibes Divertissement" is another piece that was first done for S.A.B. students, and it was put on by the company this season as a replacement for a Robbins première. It probably shouldn't be looked at too closely. But just because it is so clearly a picture of Martins trying to conjure his way out of a bind it compels you to look—look and think. Nothing Martins has made is dismissible.

The other new ballet is full of ideas, too, but most of them work. Set to Rossini chamber music, it's Martins' best-made dance suite since the "Sonate di Scarlatti" ballet, of 1979. In his book, Martins says that he originally named that ballet "Giardino di Scarlatti," but that Balanchine vetoed the title, saying it sounded like an Italian restaurant. And Martins goes on to relate what else Balanchine had to say about titles: "Balanchine pointed out to me that I hadn't begun the ballet with a garden party in mind, and that if I had, the whole work would have been different. Maybe, he said, you would have choreographed it differently and shown us a garden. As it was, I was misrepresenting the piece, smothering it in an alien notion." Well taken. But the notion that a ballet is nothing but a literal representation of its music is also alien. Balanchine has been getting by with this suggestion for years, and Martins, following suit, calls his Rossini ballet "Rossini Quartets," meaning that the music consists of two sonatas for string quartet written (at the age of twelve) by Rossini. But to follow literally the course of the music would be to indulge in music visualization, and neither Balanchine nor Martins has ever done that. What they have done instead is to fit a choreographic plan over, around, and through the music so that an effect of mutual support is reached. And one doesn't see quartets of dancers in "Rossini Quartets"—one is far more apt to see duos, trios, and sextets. In fact, "Giardino di Rossini" would be a lot closer to the experience of the ballet, because we do see something like an eighteenth-century formal garden in the choreography's clustering ensembles and ambient paths. The floral bloom of the women—Farrell plus Judith Fugate, Elyse Borne, and Lisa Hess—is especially sweet. And there is even a garden set—the one by David Mitchell that was used for the "Dance in America" videotaping of "Bournonville Divertissements." One can see that Martins is heading for Balanchine-Mozart territory here, and also that, compared with Balanchine-Delibes, it's safe ground. He creates an impression of profusion and symmetry, a meticulous sense of line and ornament, a harmony of scale and impetus. The three ladies of the ensemble and their partners—Daniel Duell, Jean-Pierre Frohlich, and Kipling Houston—are all brightly featured. There may be an overuse of canonic movement in these sections, but, by and large, Martins' invention flows whenever these dancers are on the stage. If he had been content to make a Rossini sextet, he might have had a perfect, unimpeachable, and rather useless little ballet.

But Martins poses questions. He wants to explore the shadowed paths—the metaphysical side of the Baroque. He brings on Farrell and her partner, Lüders, and right away the little ballet threatens to crumble. Martins' choreography for Farrell is a question within a question; he gets carried away with his investigations of her technique. He asks her for a wide assortment of her awkward graces, but he doesn't combine them into a portrait—he trails them through the ballet like the pieces of a puzzle. We can feel his excitement over her, yet it's the technical mechanics of her style which keep exciting him, not the illusion that they can create. And although we see what Martins wants of her—the whole possibility she offers of strange proportion and mysterious connection to the scene before us—we don't see him do more than indicate that possibility. To his credit, Martins doesn't take Farrell and her impact for granted; he really works at trying to integrate her and Lüders with the rest of the ballet. But in order to achieve integration Martins would have had to take a giant step artistically—from the invention of steps to the dramatization of forms.

Martins tries various strategies of integration, and even on the level of incident they don't make sense. For example, the little ritualistic passage whereby Lüders exits, leaving Farrell with the women, and then, after a brief adagietto that carries the linked-together group across the stage, Farrell also exits, taking one or two dancers with her and admitting others, who join whoever is left in a pas de trois. The first time the ritual happens, it's Duell who joins Borne and Hess; the second time, it's Frohlich and Houston who join Fugate—the trios are mirror opposites. But whether Farrell takes with her one dancer or two, male or female, seems sheerest happenstance, and, in fact, we don't even see that she takes anybody with her; people just leave at the same time. So the ritual has no magic. Farrell isn't the catalyst of change that she might be, and Lüders—who seems in a hurry to abandon her—isn't her agent, as he might well be, too. The invisible film that binds all the dancers in the Andante of "Divertimento No. 15," as partners succeed partners in wave after wave—does it take the genius of Balanchine to create that? In another passage, Lüders partners Farrell while the three other men hover on the sidelines. And hover is all they do; one wants to see them pulled organically into the pas de deux long before they compose an escort for the principals as they exit. Martins appears to be contradicting his own intentions. There's a similar contradiction in "Delibes Divertissement" where the principals are twice pulled apart by the corps, as Giselle and Albrecht are by the Wilis. And *then* Martins has them come together and dance, as if (as in "Giselle") the tension had been resolved. But there was no tension there in the first place. Can one make decorative filigree out of what once was drama? When does incident become pattern and pattern metaphor?

Perhaps the biggest question for Martins, and for Joseph Duell, another capable young choreographer working in the company, is to what extent Balanchine's own answers to these questions are adduceable as models, as precedents, and as a license to proceed. In Duell's "Création du Monde," the flashing surface of a ballet is created. Duell has duplicated Balanchine's stylistic manner and mode of address, but he hasn't tapped through to the process by which Balanchine arrived at his manners and modes. Martins is aware of this subterranean process; in his book he talks about locating the "central pulse" of a piece of music—its "structural bones and impetus." And that, to be sure, is what the process means to Balanchine. But Martins' work so far hasn't shown a great sensitivity to individual pieces of music precisely in the way that Balanchine's work does show it—in the evolution and progression of a distinctive imag-



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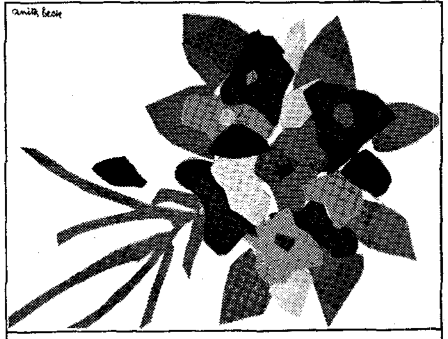

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ery, different in each ballet. One suspects that in Balanchine's case questions about incident and filigree and metaphor don't even arise; once he's broken open the music, he has all the answers. One suspects, too, that Martins' gifts as a choreographer are much more compartmentalized than Balanchine's—that he can compose lyrically and he can compose dramatically, but all the possibilities in between, which Balanchine has explored again and again, may be closed off. Balanchine has made drama—great and exalted drama—from purely lyrical and formal elements, but that doesn't mean it's the only goal of choreography.

Although "Rossini Quartets" conceals most of its problems behind a very smooth and appealing façade, it still comes out strangely shaped: the perfect sextet foundation supports the folly that the material for Farrell and Lüders becomes as Martins tries to take it farther. (He takes it so far that the coda, in which all the components of the ballet should gather and rhyme and rest, looks like a scramble.) The first time I saw the piece, Farrell, for all the tricky balancing acts she has to perform, looked as if she weren't doing enough. By the end of the season, she was plumping out her role—not with added tricks but with finer and more suspenseful tact in continuity, threading one event to the next. Lüders did the difficult partnering very well. A pity his most outstanding dance passage stands out because it is overchoreographed. (Overchoreographing is a tendency Martins falls into now and then. But, he reports in the book, Balanchine has already warned him about it.) Some observers like to point out that Martins doesn't make the ballets that, from the way he dances, you think he'd make. His celebrated reserve onstage doesn't, I guess, prepare people for the brightness and tenacity of his work. But from his earliest days with N.Y.C.B. Martins' unique quality—he had it especially as a partner—was patience. If you rule out of that attribute any suggestion of passivity, it's what he shows now as a choreographer. He is going to keep asking questions until he is satisfied.

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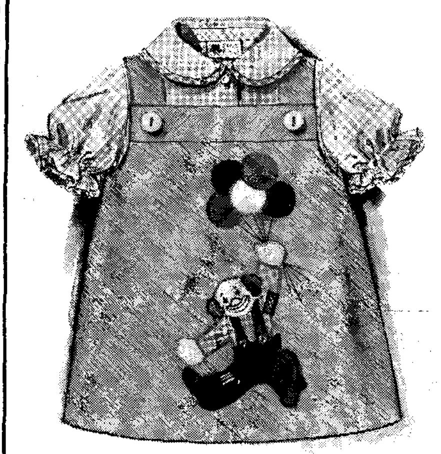

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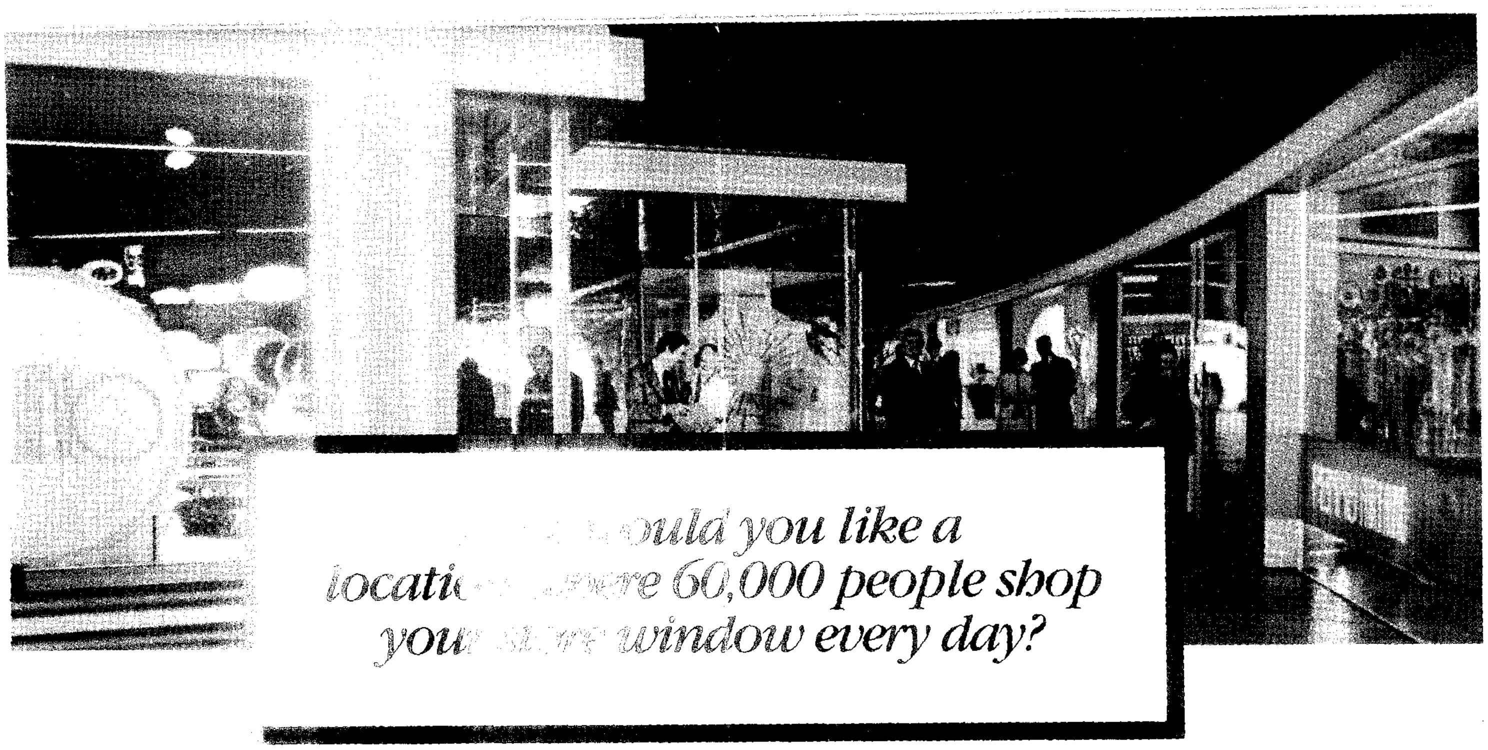

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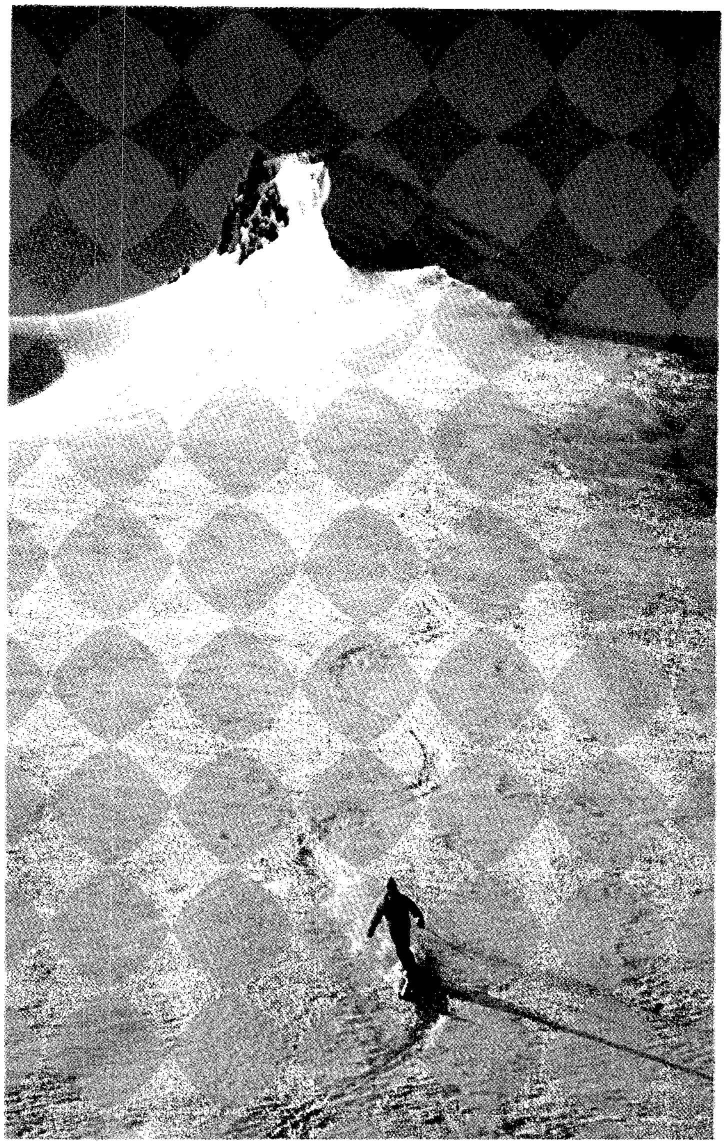

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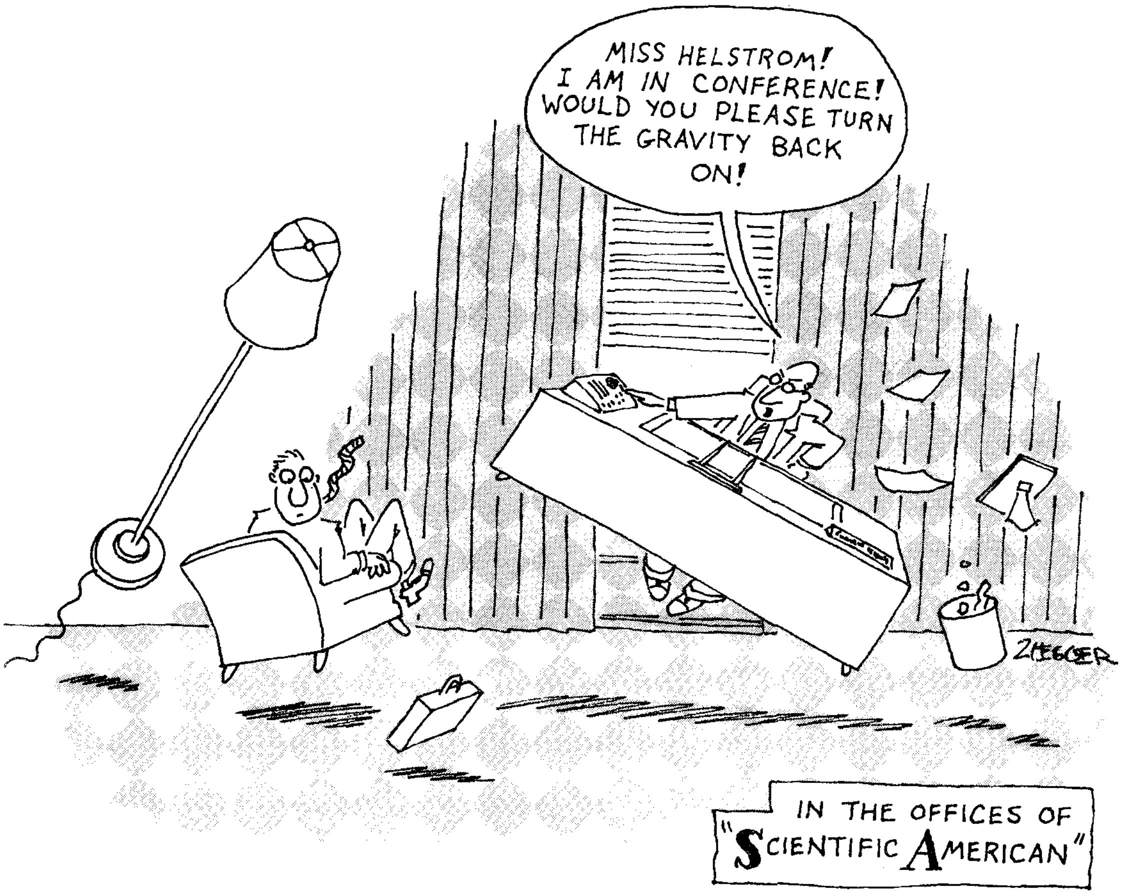
PUTTING a grossly insensitive, coldhearted deadhead at the center of a movie is a perverse thing to want to do, and Martin Scorsese's “The King of Comedy” isn't an ordinary kind of bad movie. It's so—deliberately—quiet and empty that it doesn't provide even the dumb, mind-rotting diversion that can half amuse audiences at ordinary bad movies. It's too enervated for that, yet the silence and emptiness are mesmerizing, and the scenes—frequently with just two people talking and nothing going on around them—are so extended and spooky that the audience, overprepared to laugh, grabs at any possibility of release. The plot is small-scale—material for a sketch, dragged out. Rupert Pupkin, the fan played by Robert De Niro, is a New York messenger who is determined to become a TV star like his idol, the comic Jerry Langford (played by Jerry Lewis), the host of the country's most popular late-night talk show. Rupert rehearses alone in his mother's basement for the time when he will make his guest appearance on that show, and when all his efforts to ingratiate himself with Langford fail he kidnaps him and negotiates for a ten-minute spot as ransom. Scorsese must have wanted the film to be very intense and intimate, because there's almost no casual, everyday life. Rupert, Langford (he may have been named for Fritz Lang and John Ford), and the third character—the rich hysteric Masha (Sandra Bernhard), who helps Rupert with the kidnapping because she fantasizes having sex with Langford—are all loners.

The camera thrusts Masha at you, emphasizing her curved nose and pulpy lips; she's like a drag-queen terrorist in an Andy Warhol film. She certainly gets your attention: you want to run for cover. It's obvious that Scorsese means us to feel that way. Masha's stridency, Rupert's aggressive stupidity, Langford's black bile—Scorsese feels he's doing something salutary by rubbing our noses in this ugliness. It's “The Day of the Locust” in the age of television, but with a druggy vacuousness that suggests the Warhol productions of the sixties. It might be an homage to John Cassavetes.

Robert De Niro's Rupert Pupkin is Jake La Motta without his fists. In “Raging Bull,” De Niro and Scorsese had things boiled down, so that Jake's entire character was the chip on his shoulder. This time there's no chip. If De Niro, disfigured again here, has removed himself from comparison with other handsome young actors, it's not because what he does now is more than acting. It's less; it's anti-acting. Performers such as John Barrymore and Orson Welles and Laurence Olivier have delighted in putting on beards and false noses, yet, no matter how heavy the disguise, they didn't disappear; they still had spirit, and we could feel the pleasure that they took in playing foul, crookback monsters and misers—drawing us inside and revealing the terrors of the misshapen, the deluded. A great actor merges his soul with that of his characters—or, at least, gives us the illusion that he does. De Niro in disguise denies his characters a soul. It's not merely that he hollows himself out and becomes Jake La Motta, or Des the priest in “True Confessions,” or Rupert Pupkin—he makes them hollow, too, and merges with the character's emptiness.

In most of De Niro's early performances—in “Hi, Mom!,” even in “The Gang That Couldn't Shoot Straight,” and in “Mean Streets,” “The Godfather, Part II,” “Taxi Driver,” and “New York, New York”—there was bravura in his acting. You could feel the actor's excitement shining through the character, and it made him exciting to watch. But, for all his virtuosity, his Monroe Stahr in “The Last Tycoon” was lifeless, and his Michael in “The Deer Hunter” heroic yet never quite human. And then he started turning himself into repugnant, flesh effigies of soulless characters. Rupert is chunky and thick-nosed, and he has a foul, greasy mustache; is it so De Niro can remove himself further from the character and condescend to him even physically? Rupert waves his arms when he talks; they work in pairs, as if he didn't have the brains to move them independently of each other. De Niro cunningly puts in all the stupid little things that actors customarily leave out. It's a stud-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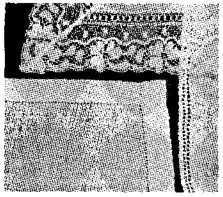

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ied performance; De Niro has learned to be a total fool. Big accomplishment! His Rupert is as boring to us as he is to Langford. What De Niro is doing might be based on the Warholian idea that the best parody of a thing is the thing itself.

Rupert doesn't really talk to or listen to anyone else in the movie; whatever he's doing, he's always in rehearsal, trying out his new moves. Scorsese and De Niro close him in, just as Hal Ashby and Jerzy Kosinski closed in the Peter Sellers character in that dim, prolonged one-joke satire "Being There," and for the same purpose: to tell us that TV is making such fools of us that we'll accept a moron—as a statesman in "Being There," and as an entertainer in "The King of Comedy." Sellers' stillness, his unhappy expression, his stately misery in those itchy old clothes, and the Oriental-sage formality of his speech didn't make much sense—how could these be the effects of a simpleton's watching TV? But Sellers did create a solemnly dull character: a baffled, easily hurt, wanting-to-please moron. Pupkin is a nothing.

De Niro's performance—from the Nobody's-Home school of acting—is of a piece with Scorsese's whole conception of the film. "The King of Comedy" could have developed an emotional charge if we were pulled inside Rupert Pupkin and felt that we shared the envy and craziness of this pesky fool—if we, too, began to feel that Jerry Langford the star owed us something. But Pupkin, in his loud synthetics, and with a hideous haircut (an imitation of Langford's hideous haircut), inspires no empathy. We don't feel any anxiety for him even when he performs his act, and we're not meant to. He is presented as a man who cares for no one. He crashes Langford's country mansion, accompanied by a beautiful black woman, Rita (Diahnne Abbott), who was a cheerleader when he knew her in high school and is now a bartender; he has told her that they are invited for the weekend, and he probably isn't just trying to impress her—he's probably hoping that she'll wow Langford and it will help him win acceptance. (Rupert doesn't understand that Langford isn't given to partying on weekends.) When he and Rita are ordered out, he's totally indifferent to the humiliation she experiences. She's furious at herself for having trusted Rupert when she knew better, and she tries to explain

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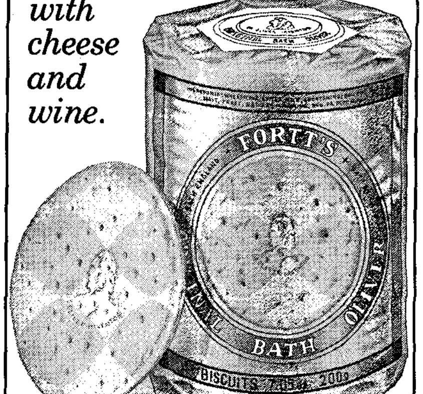

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to Langford, but he's too pigheaded and incensed to respond to her need to dissociate herself from Rupert's scheme, and Rupert, eager to get in solid with Langford, brushes her off as if he barely knew her. Everybody comes off horribly in this sequence, Rita included—she gets even with Langford by stealing a small, perhaps valuable box from a table.

The minds behind this picture come off the worst. They've set it all up for us: the cheerleader with no cheer left in her life; Langford, a relaxed, clear-faced child in a photograph displayed among his mementos but now puffy and implacable; and Rupert, annoyed with them both, because his attempt at pimping fails. I hate most that detail of the petty theft: this movie reduces everybody to crud. It's almost as if Rita were being punished for looking so smashing in the pale-peach-colored gown she bought specially for this big weekend; the possibility that our feelings might be engaged—that we might think we were at an ordinary movie—has to be stepped on.

Except for Diahnne Abbott's scenes, and a bit of pathos when the screaming gargoyle Masha sees her dream man leaving her and for a minute the camera relents and lets her be soft and attractive, the only emotions that come across are Langford's meanness and his contempt for Pupkin. Jerry Lewis is the only real thing here; his performance has the weight of authenticity—we can feel Langford's physical need for solitude. Lewis doesn't make an extra gesture in the entire film; Langford uses up so much energy when he's doing his show that he conserves himself by the economy of his off-camera movements. Even the sterility of his huge New York apartment serves a purpose for him: bare vistas, no one to be entertained. Out for a stroll in the city, he walks head first, sniffing the air; his body seems to dangle from that head. It's all pantomime, and it's the best scene in the movie—perhaps the only imaginative one—and it doesn't suffer from the visual chill of most of the interiors. When Langford is hounded by Pupkin, and when the sanctity of his mansion is violated, he glares at this cockroach Pupkin and he swells with impotent rage. There's something believable here: it's in Jerry Lewis's bullying face and his solid slab of a body—you feel he has reserves of rage to draw on. With a minimum of dialogue, Lewis lets us understand that Langford believes he earns his peace

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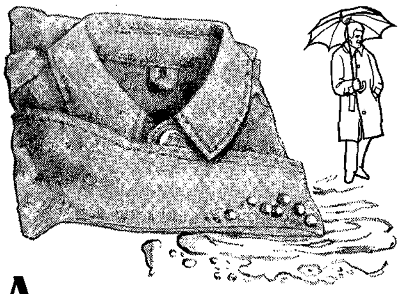

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and isolation. Lewis doesn't try to make the off-camera Langford likable; the performance says that what the off-camera star feels is his own damn business.

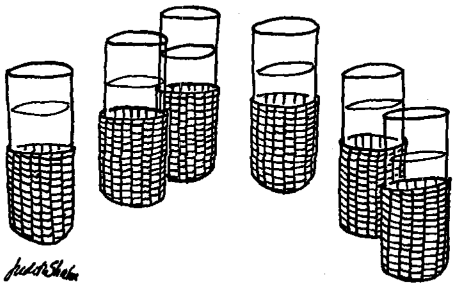
Scorsese may believe that he has made a cautionary fable—that in telling us we're worse morons than Pupkin because we laugh at Pupkin's jokes he's doing us a service. A lot of people actually accepted the bit of pipsqueak irony in "Being There" as a serious warning, but that film had a deluxe, deep-toned prettiness, and it was clear; it didn't make people feel stranded the way "The King of Comedy" does. Scorsese must have decided to give us the creeps. The shots are held so long that we look for more in them than is there. Langford's apartment, his offices, with their long corridors, and most of the other settings seem designed to death, because almost nothing happens in them, and their few inhabitants don't look at ease or in the right place; even Shelley Hack, who is cool and smooth as an efficient secretary, walks across an office reception area as if it were something she was called upon to do just once an eon.

In interviews that have been printed recently, Scorsese talks about his own shift in identifications—how he has gone from being a Pupkin to being a Langford. He appears to be playing the latest director (and sometimes star) game of discussing each new movie as if it had come out of his loins. No doubt he believes what he's saying—at least, while he's saying it—but the script of "The King of Comedy," by Paul Zimmerman, isn't about a person of talent who's driven to find the expressive forms he needs or about an artist trying to gain a foothold. It's about a devious, unfeeling nerd with a stale, jokebook mentality—the kind of fan who thinks he should be in the star's place.

In an inchoate, under-the-surface way, the material (which Zimmerman wrote in the early seventies) is affected by an offscreen presence: John W. Hinckley, Jr. The story has a basic, generic resemblance to "Taxi Driver." I don't think there is any great mystery about Hinckley's fixation on that movie: the character of the assassin Travis Bickle in "Taxi Driver" was partly modelled on Arthur Bremer, the diarist who shot Governor George Wallace, and it may be a modern anomic archetype. But, having struck a nerve once, Scorsese may have squirmed when he realized he might hit another one, because he seems to have backed away.

This director, whose specialty (except for "Raging Bull") has always been getting inside his characters' manias and making us know from the inside how they felt, stays on the outside this time. The Scorsese whom we expect to love junk culture—who used it rapturously in "Mean Streets" and "Taxi Driver" and parts of "New York, New York"—is suddenly crucifying people for their bad taste. The camera fixes on Rupert's cheap clothes and mad Masha's distorted expressions with the punishing scorn of a John Schlesinger. The pop music that Scorsese used to get us drunk on has been replaced by post-industrial-malaise music—the Muzak in elevators and offices which we're hardly conscious of. Except for the opening song, "Come Rain or Come Shine," which has a nostalgic quality here—it recalls a time when there were idealistic heroes and heroines in movies, a time when there was the promise of sexual fulfillment—the music is just neutral stuff in the background.

"The King of Comedy" is a chore to watch, but it's much buggier and more worrying than most dead films, because its deadness must be intentional. I don't believe that Scorsese's identification has shifted to the Langford-Vegas axis, but something has gone sour. You can feel it in the mistiming. He designs his own form of alienation in this movie—it seems to teeter between jokiness and hate. The forward-looking, energetic young lovers who used to be at the center of movies are sometimes replaced now by confused, desperate characters; Scorsese replaces them with characters who are pitifully incapable of sustaining our interest, and that leaves a vacancy. Like Coppola in "One from the Heart," Scorsese puts "little people" who are mountains of clichés at the center, and then italicizes everything around them. He does it in a style that's so domineering it's screwy. When Rupert and his old high-school cheerleader sit in an almost empty



Chinese restaurant, a man sitting alone behind Rupert imitates his ridiculous hand-waving gestures; the scene comes across as a joke on conventional-movie background shots. When Rupert fantasizes being a star and sitting at a table in Sardi's with Langford, a caricaturist is seen drawing them both. Everything that happens seems to be mimicked or repeated elsewhere in a different form, and the effect is to robotize people. Rita's lifting the box from Langford's table is prefigured by a roll of microfilm being snitched from a purse in a scene from "Pickup on South Street" that is glimpsed on one of the three TV screens in Langford's apartment.

As often as possible, Scorsese creates little pockets in the frame and slips in talismanic, souvenir effects. People associated with Scorsese—agents, friends, family—are placed in strategic spots or turn up as life-size cardboard cutouts. They're Scorsese's own version of the photographs that Langford keeps around to document his life. And Scorsese has had so much press coverage that some people in the audience catch the personal references, and they may even laugh. But these details (which are probably full of meaning for Scorsese) don't really have any meaning in the picture. With an audience that's squirming, wanting something to respond to, Scorsese can get a few laughs from the comic rhythm of repetition: an office receptionist looks up at Pupkin at intervals, always in exactly the same way—another reminder of old, conventional-movie techniques. And when the director, who frequently keeps us staring at the austere, neo-Art Deco functionalism of Langford's office, places a camera on an empty doorway, Rupert soon comes rushing out, followed by two security men who are trying to eject him; it's a basic comedy chase. In this sequence, a storyboard strip can be seen hanging from an office wall. Maybe Scorsese needs to play tricks of style to fuel his interest in this movie. Maybe, having got into a project that was wrong for him, he started manufacturing little inflatable pool toys: floating bars of soap, swim fins—anything to distract him. But there isn't an ounce of fun in his playfulness.

And though the film turns indecisive and fumbling toward the end, there's no getting around it: the ironic little punch built into the material requires that Rupert Pupkin achieve fame and fortune as a result of kidnapping Langford. The movie would

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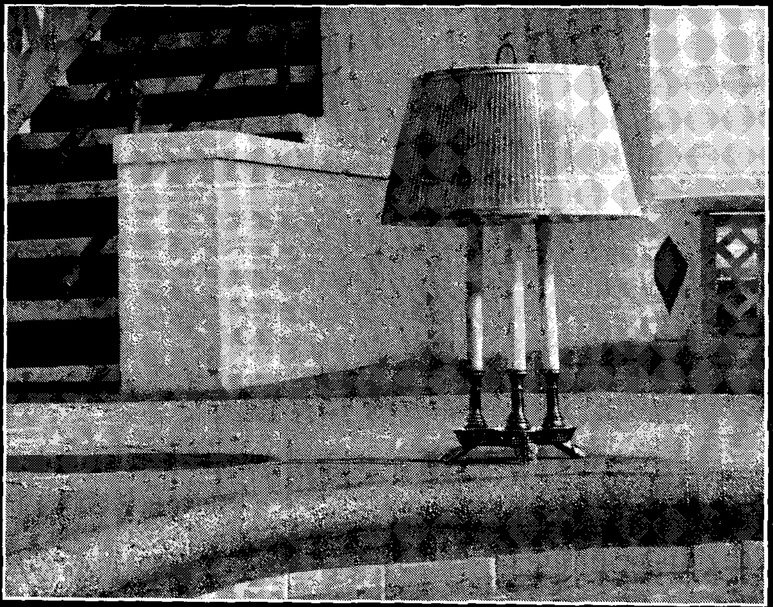

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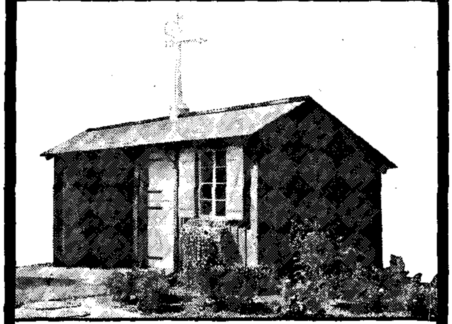

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have no point at all without that. "The King of Comedy" is the tale of a no one who becomes a someone who is still really a no one. This film despises its own protagonist and the culture that produced him. There's no aesthetic rule that says an artist has to like his characters, or his culture, either; as John Osborne has demonstrated, an artist can bring both to life by the passion of his hatred. But Scorsese's hatred has no fire in it; what he's rubbing our noses in finally is a glaring emptiness, and it's his, not ours. Just in case we missed the film's subtext that even sex is dead, poor crazy Masha starts singing "You're going to love me . . . come rain or come shine" to the trussed-up, kidnapped Langford. Despite Scorsese's pulling away from the implications of the plot, it's pretty hard to watch this movie without, in the back of your mind, thinking of Johnny Carson and other celebrity performers, and of the loonies out there with their hawklike determination to get at the stars. You can't help thinking: "The King of Comedy" is a training film for pests, and worse.

THERE were psychoanalysts en masse at the convention in "High Anxiety," and there were sizable numbers of them in "Spellbound" and "The Cobweb" and other films set in sanitaria, but I doubt if there have ever been as many psychoanalyst characters in one movie as there are in the light, romantic comedy "Lovesick," which was written and directed by Marshall Brickman. Starting with the hero, played by Dudley Moore, and including such eminent analysts as Selma Diamond, Wallace Shawn (snappier here than usual), Alan King, Stefan Schnabel, Richard B. Shull, and John Huston, and the shade of a trim, urbane Sigmund Freud (Alec Guinness), they're an amusing crew, given to collecting professionally sanctified art—tiny African sculptures that suggest fertility. The story is perhaps too simple: Moore inherits a patient, a young playwright (Elizabeth McGovern), from an analyst friend (Shawn) who has fallen in love with her and died of guilt. Of course, Moore falls in love with her, too. Luckily, she has the opposite effect on him: she brings him to life. (This isn't hard to believe, because as the playwright the rosy-cheeked McGovern is like a walking announcement of spring; she's *endearingly* childlike—you can almost hear the whirring hum of her mind working.)

As he did in his first film as writer-director, the 1980 "Simon," Brickman parodies the craziness of the highly educated and compulsively self-aware. His touch and his pacing are much more sure this time—he has a dapper, weird precision of tone that's funny. He knows how to tell jokes visually with deadpan timing, and he can write dry, shiny, casually funny dialogue. What (on the basis of these first two films) he can't do is provide a structure for a movie. He starts with a promising (if flimsy) situation and then wanders away from it, while the dramatic tension dribbles out. This may be partly because he doesn't bite off enough to chew for an hour and a half; in "Lovesick" the invention flags after the initial rush. He doesn't even give himself any subsidiary situations to cut away to, and this puts too much of a burden on Dudley Moore, who is always in danger as a performer, because he's so eager to oblige. Moore is too engaging here right from the start. The hero should be a Freudian pedant so the girl can humanize him. Moore is too familiar and likable to get away with playing a tight-faced prig, even if Brickman had set it up. Moore is very skillful, but Brickman may not have found the right, distinctive actor for his hero yet; Alan Arkin wasn't it in "Simon," either. (Brickman may need someone who isn't an all-purpose comedian but will discover his comic resources when he starts delivering Brickman's lines.)

There's a comic sensibility in this movie, and it comes from Brickman's functioning as both writer and director. But two movies have gone limp on him; someone who isn't as emotionally committed to the material as he is can easily see the point at which the script starts falling apart. (It happens here when Moore and McGovern have a quarrel that pops up out of nowhere.) Brickman may come around to the idea that he could use a collaborator on the writing—someone with a tougher-minded instinct for plot development and perhaps something a little more vital on his mind. (On occasion, artists are freed to be themselves when they collaborate, as Brickman must have learned when he worked with Woody Allen on the scripts of "Sleeper," "Annie Hall," and "Manhattan.") Brickman has his own comic grace; it's sustaining energy—and a subject—that he lacks.

But there is some good, trick casting—the painter Larry Rivers, his greatbird head held high, plays the painter whom Moore's wife leaves him for. And there are terrific bits: the analyst Shawn, holding the knife with which he's supposed to cut his birthday-party cake, is suddenly frozen by the associations in his mind; a hard-bitten interviewer at a Social Security office (that inspired comedienne Anne DeSalvo) is completely impervious to the stress she's putting on the raging paranoiac (David Strathairn) who's applying for help; a homosexual analysand (Kent Broadhurst) leaps to interpretations of his comatose doctor's silence; another patient (Gene Saks) lives in a state of perpetual crisis, while a wealthy woman (Renée Taylor) goes to an analyst because it helps fill her days. The plot also involves Ron Silver (who in "Best Friends" played a movie producer resembling Jon Peters) as a Hollywood star resembling Al Pacino—a star who comes back to the New York theatre to renew himself in the playwright McGovern's first opus. The twenty-one-year-old playwright from out of town is not only lucky enough to land a sumptuous apartment and have her first play produced by Joe Papp—she has the blissful good fortune to have a Lincoln Center theatre for rehearsals. This fantasy aspect of "Lovesick" is rather appealing; Brickman is attempting a modern fairy-tale version of a comedy of manners—a Lubitsch film for the eighties. What isn't appealing is the "niceness" in his approach—the tasteful sprightliness that keeps the movie from being about anything. Somebody as sharp as Marshall Brickman shouldn't try to make a virtue of innocuousness.

—PAULINE KAEL

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Election of officers for 1983 was held by the Abington Business and Professional Association at a luncheon on Tuesday.

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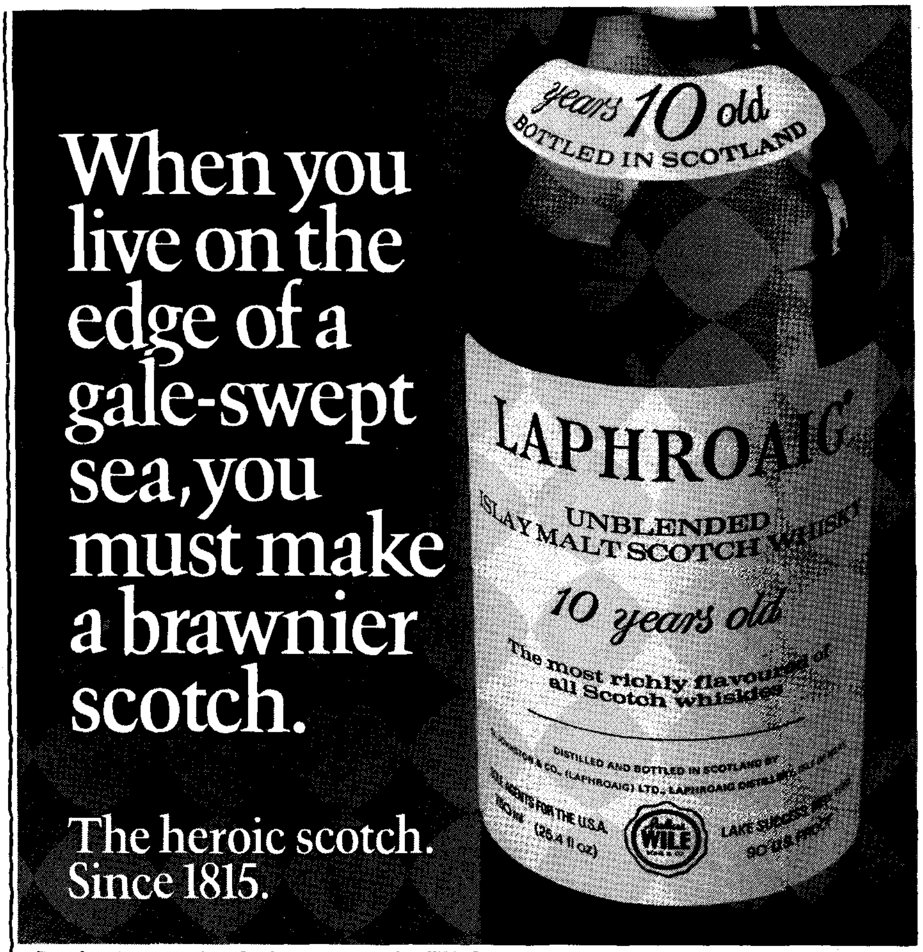
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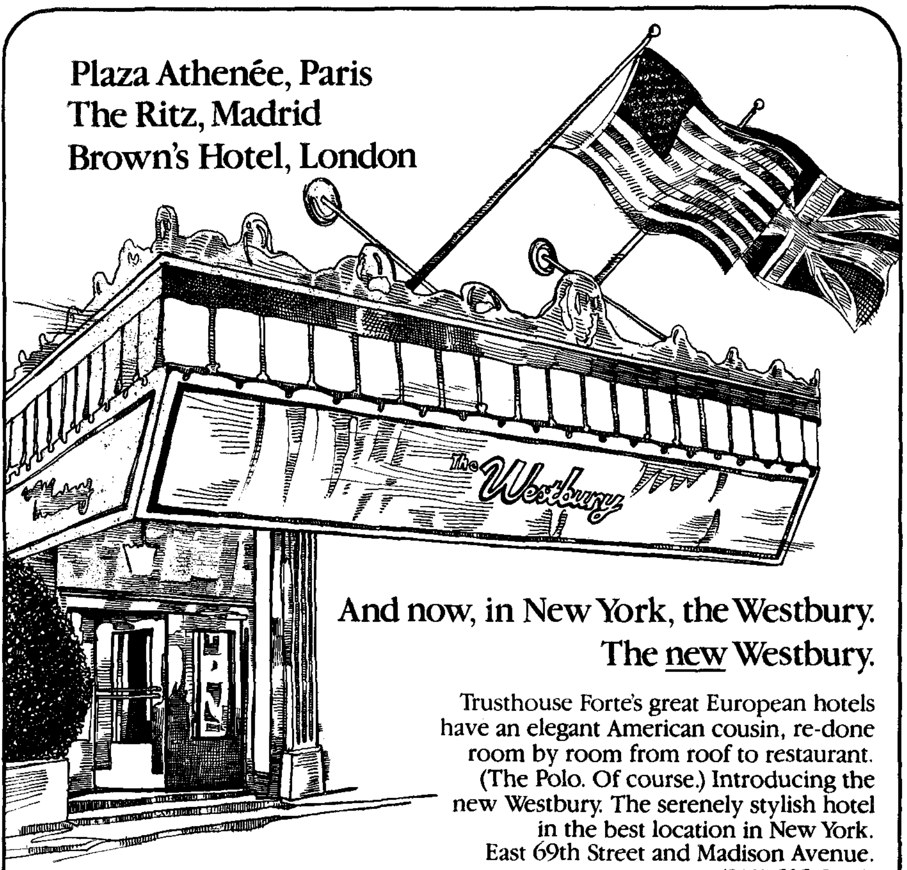
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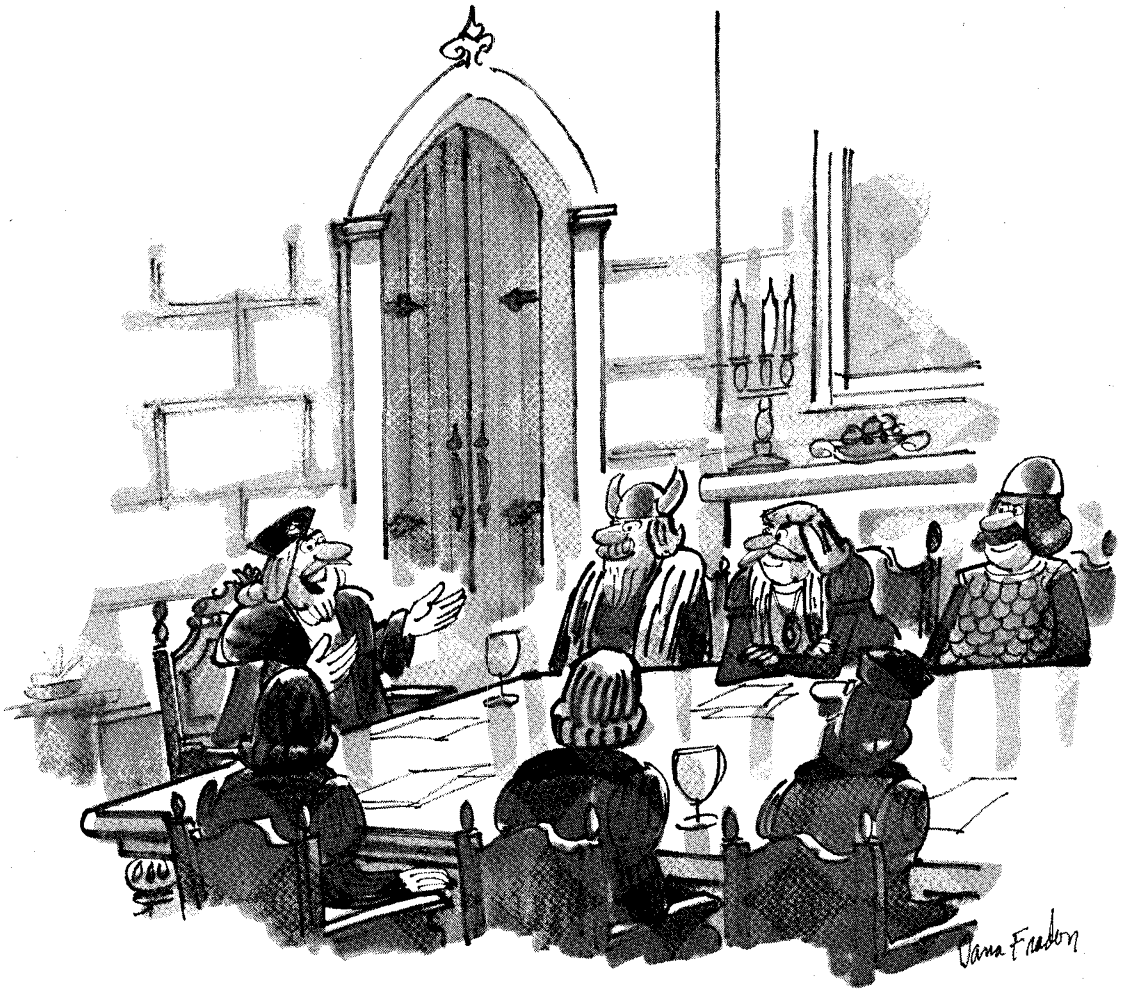
BOOKS

George Orwell

AS 1984 approaches, George Orwell's bleak, offhand fortune-telling creeps up on us. His credentials as, at any rate, a fabulist were established by "Animal Farm" and "1984": they still have millions of readers—and not only in his Oceania and its British Airstrip—thirty years after his death. He has become a legend. No biographer has got to the core of his privacy. He has, of course, been stereotyped by wits: as the loner; the inevitable English eccentric; the old Etonian who went native in his own country; the rebel, *tout pur;* in some respects the British opposite number to Camus, but without the theatrical traits—something of an amateur, a dissident and consciously displaced person, and yet often the best of hilarious good company. The interesting thing about T. R. Fyvel's rather belated "George Orwell: A Personal Memoir" (Macmillan; $14.95) is that there is a natural accord with his friend up to a point. Fyvel himself has the "foreign," if not "overseas," eye. He is the son of a distinguished Viennese Zionist, was educated in Switzerland and at English schools and Cambridge, and became literary editor of the London socialist weekly *Tribune*. In 1940, Fyvel met Orwell, not long after coming back from the Middle East, and was puzzled by Orwell's hostility to Zionism. Orwell was not long back from the Spanish Civil War and had written what many feel to be his most "real" book, "Homage to Catalonia." He and Fyvel talked about another loner—Orde Wingate, the puritan guerrilla leader who was to reappear fighting with the Chindits behind the Japanese lines in Burma. More important, Fyvel had caught the speculative Orwell at a crisis of conscience.

Memories of the rancor and confusion among English Lefties in the thirties and forties have become vague. The matter is intricate; socialists old and young were split. Fyvel takes us back to the tangled arguments of the forgotten Popular Front, more than half penetrated by the Communists. Always the minority man, Orwell had fought in Spain with the tiny, semi-Trotskyite POUM and had seen what the Communist Party did not only to schismatic minorities but to the far larger old-fashioned Spanish Anarchists. They were beaten, deposed, and jailed. The official hand of Moscow was in this, and Orwell was sickened by it. The intervention of Communism was cynical, fatal to the cause, and—above all, Orwell felt—dishonest. With him, "dishonesty" was a fighting word, the root of all evil. It was quickly followed by "hypocrisy." Many waverers on the Left found themselves accused by him.

At their first meeting in 1940, Fyvel remembers Orwell as many of us knew him: "A very tall, thin man, with a long, thin, haggard face, with deep-set blue eyes, a poor skin, a poor, small moustache and deep lines etched in grooves down his cheeks. Lines of suffering?" His clothes were shabby; his voice was often weak and flat, because of a sniper's wound he had got in Spain. But if he had a general air of neglect—if he looked like "a seedy Sahib"—he had the confidence of his class and school. He had a military briskness. Those who saw him among the ramshackle "guerrillas" in Barcelona speak of his soldierly training and nonchalance. He clearly carried the habit of command. In Burma, he had been an efficient police officer. He had resigned on principle, because he had grown to hate the idea of Empire. It was wrong. (Perhaps there was a "displaced person" in a great many men of Anglo-Indian families—a restlessness,



"Then we're in agreement. There's nothing rotten here in Denmark. Something is rotten everywhere else."

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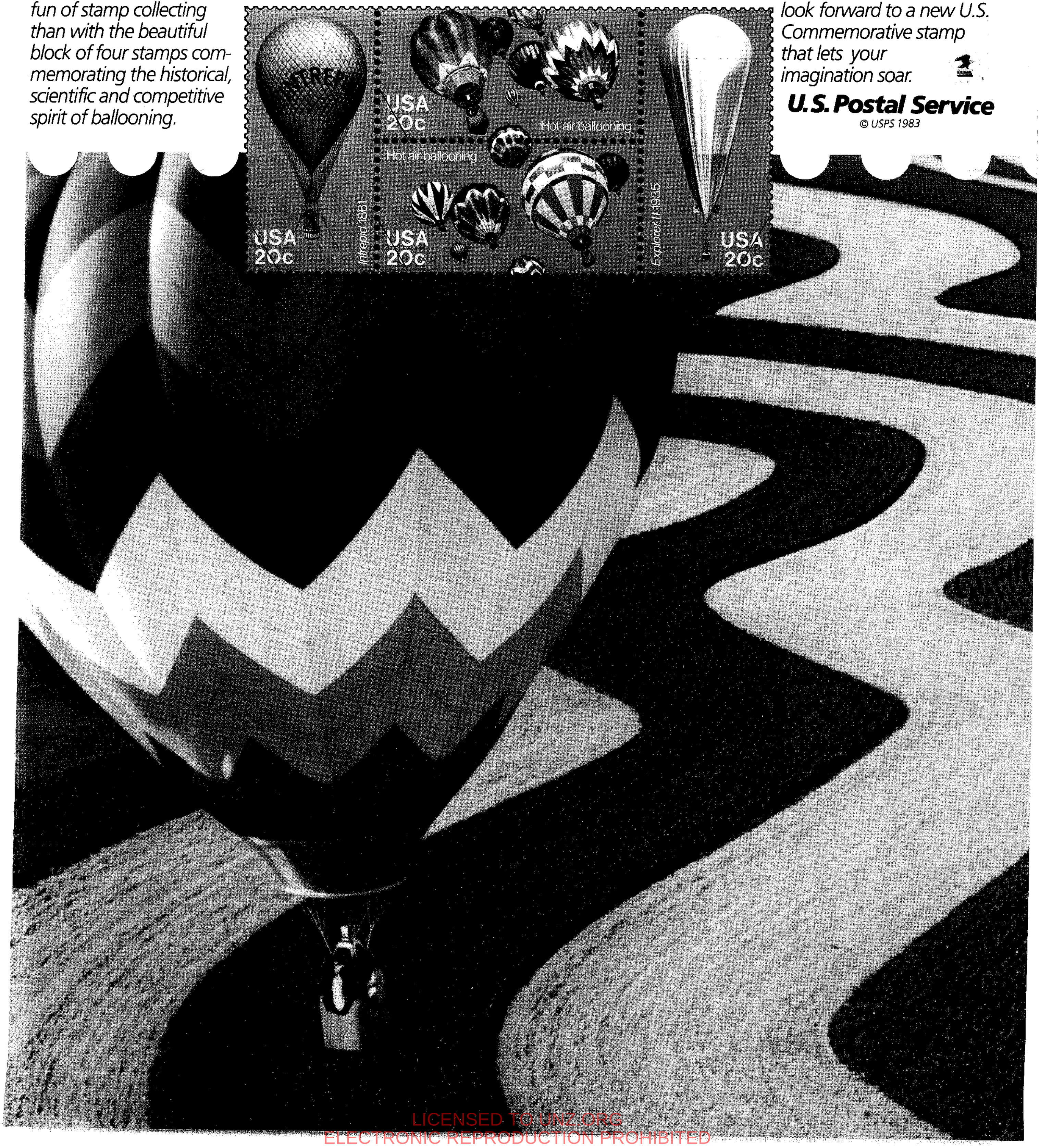
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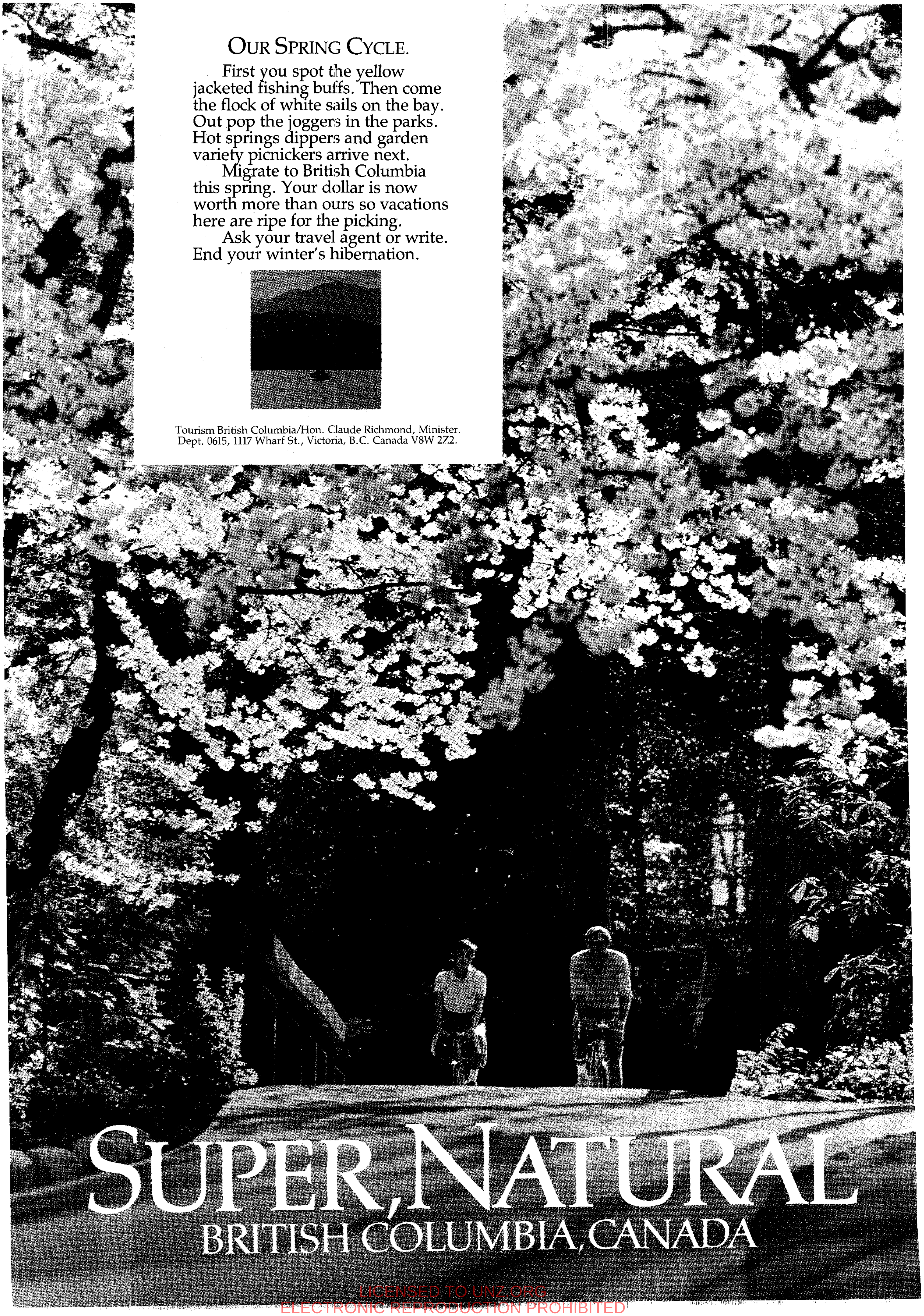

o.) Orwell had another reason for aving Burma: he wanted to get home d be a novelist and journalist. He anted to discover the "benighted" known "native" England outside e walls of the privileged. When one nsiders him either as a person or as a riter, Orwell, as Fyvel says, "always oked at the world from the perspective of his own personal and social tuation and needed always to define d redefine where he stood and what e thought on any issue." For this ason, all his writing is autobioraphical. "He believed firmly in comitment—in committing himself unquivocally." In prose and temper, his aster was Swift. Middle-class intelctual socialists were too comfortable their theories; many of them were parlor aesthetes." They did not now, Orwell thought, the common nglish crowd: "their mild knobby ces, their bad teeth and gentle maners," their private tastes—they were race of flower lovers, pigeon fanciers, mateur carpenters, darts players, and they were given to lapses into heavy rinking, gambling, and bawdiness, eir hearts were always in the back arden, the pub, or the cup of tea. But either did Orwell really know the reonsible, organized industrial workg class intimately. He had been most ware—and, of course, rightly—of e casualties of capitalism in "The oad to Wigan Pier." He was always arking back to the Edwardian world e grew up in—a world rough but eighborly and good-natured. (Toay, as Fyvel says, the motorized orking class of the welfare state is alost another race. The workers of rwell's industrial England in the hirties did not take their holidays in lorida. Nor could the mass of British eople now be thought law-abiding. Technology has the lead, and outruns ocial reform.) Yet Orwell's nostalias had their positive side. "Animal arm" is a farming story told as a ountrified children's tale and an dult's bitter fable. Even in the realism f Orwell's early novels there is a trand of laziness.

In Orwell's tragic flight to the isand of Jura when he was actually lying, Fyvel says, he spoke of the lace as some dreamed-of Hebridean aradise where one could live off the ock—fish, light a wood fire, and row vegetables. Why did he not stay n the warm South, close to medical elp? A suicide? No, he went to work—to type and retype five thousand words a day of "1984." The flight, he

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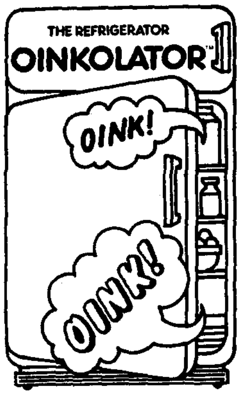

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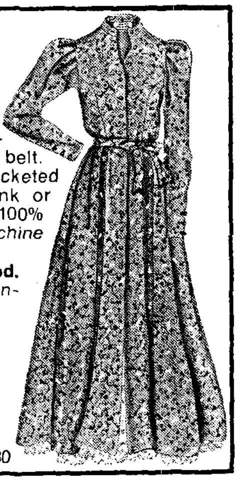

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said, was from the slavery of London journalism! (But there was something else. Orwell was broken by the sudden death of his wife when he had gone off to Germany to report about that last phase of the war. She is more fully drawn in Bernard Crick's biography, published in 1980. An educated, self-effacing young woman, she had been with him in Spain and had cleverly and bravely got him out of it.) The strange thing is that, on Jura, Orwell said that after "1984" he wanted to write a completely nonpolitical novel. Perhaps he was sick of politics, not of life.

One turns to Fyvel's later appreciation. Orwell certainly had a talent for detecting the way political and cultural things were going. He was not always right in detail. He was a detached agnostic whose eye was on the coming shape of things. In his political dissidence, he was among the first to try to resurrect what was worthwhile in the solid virtues of the past. His literary essays will certainly survive his early novels and will stand beside his fables. One expected him to hate Kipling, the imperialist, but he insisted on Kipling's sense of responsibility and service, his respect for work. On Dickens he was also excellent. He admired his oneness with the mixed crowd: Dickens, Fyvel says, was "a *nineteenth-century* liberal lacking the coarseness to think, as Orwell's contemporaries did, that all social ills could be cured merely by altering the *shape* of society." Orwell admired Evelyn Waugh as a writer, although he disapproved of his attitudes, because Waugh "disproves the Marxist theory that a worthwhile writer has to be in tune with the basic political and economic trends of his age." As a straight novelist, Orwell was fatally weak in drawing women: they seem to have existed only as vague sisters or colored-cardboard cutouts. But in his two great fables he was, again like Swift, a superb inventor. Big Brother is the perfect silent villain. Perhaps to Swift's political angers Orwell owed his invention of those sinister but terribly recognizable Ministries of Love, Truth, Plenty, and Peace; certainly to Swift's passion for plain truth in language Orwell owed his contemptuous invention of Newspeak and doublethink, which infest politics today. It is telling that Winston Smith is ruined by the idle human crime of being a private person keeping a diary. Big Brother's infernal telescreen is a forecast of the computer.

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ne can, however, object that poor Vinston is self-pitying, liable to guilt; e lacks the plain confidence of Gulver.

Orwell could not be a stolid Gulver reborn, nor could he be as blister-ig as Voltaire was. For, as Fyvel oncludes, the social future frightened im:

> He was profoundly afraid of what he w as a larger, inevitable social change hich was simultaneously in progress: the rowth of a dehumanized, technological ollective life lying ahead, particularly ithin the Big Soviet State in the East, but r that matter also within the State of epersonalized Big Business in the West. Ie was afraid of the loss of personal freeom as the collective society took over. Ie was afraid of violence as the moral hecks of the old bourgeois order crumled. . . . And he was of course afraid of the nplications of nuclear terror. . . . It is as ne great anticipator of our modern diemma and the advocate of the only virtues t our disposal that I like to remember rwell.

hat is very well said.

—V. S. PRITCHETT

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

UNGRY HEARTS, by Francine Prose (Pantheon; $12.95). A fanciful story about an unusual production of "The Dybbuk," staged by New York's famous Yiddish Art Theatre, that tours South America in 1921. Sixty years later, the leading lady (secretly married, during the rehearsals to the leading man, who played the role of her doomed lover) recalls how she practiced and perfected the lines in which the eponymous dybbuk (the doomed lover's aggrieved spirit) spoke through her, and then how, onstage in Buenos Aires, she opened her mouth and strange Spanish phrases came out. The story ends happily back in New York, but first the troupe must encounter an assortment of exotic characters, including the actress's look-alike (an Argentine widow whose sad and bizarre story only partly explains the actress's condition) and an outlandish rabbi in Uruguay (he looks like Zapata and serves his congregation magical omelettes, of Proustian powers), who exorcises the Spanish-speaking spirit with equal doses of logic, mysticism, and old-fashioned festivities. Francine Prose, the author of five other unusual novels ("Animal Magnetism," for one), copes well with any skeptical readers; her aged narrator's abiding interest in her own

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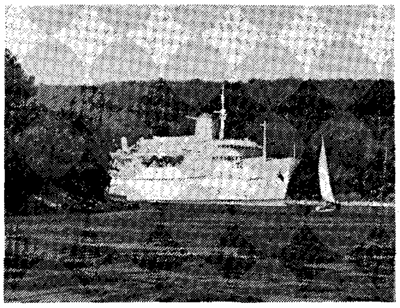

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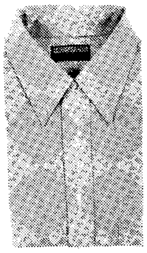

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memories is infectious and ultimately disarming.

A Villa in France, by J. I. M. Stewart (Norton; $15.50). The setting of this fussy little novel is (mainly) a vicarage abutting an estate (complete with duck pond) in England; the subject is (mainly) marriage and money (inherited, earned, and invested); and the main characters are a pair of brothers (one slightly duller than the other) who grew up on the estate, the girl next door (about ten years their junior), her father (the vicar, and a widowed hypochondriac), and his youthful physician, who once dabbled in the duck pond with the brothers and the girl, and who in the final pages (and days) of the story (it spans about a quarter century) plays detective at a villa in France. This development holds out hope for some excitement (the author's mystery-writing self, alias Michael Innes, seems to be taking command), but the doctor's detective work turns out to be nine-tenths character analysis. Mr. Stewart has been analyzing his characters from the start, in musty, mock-Jamesian terms ("To have been noticed by anyone on anything he had anywhere propounded," he observes of the duller brother, "was still something grateful to him at all times"), and so the reader is one step ahead of the action: the wrong place, when suspense is involved, to be.

Note: "The Moons of Jupiter," a collection of stories by Alice Munro, has been published by Knopf ($12.95). Some of the stories first appeared in *The New Yorker*.

GENERAL

The Playwright and the Pirate: Bernard Shaw and Frank Harris—A Correspondence, edited by Stanley Weintraub (Penn State; $18.75). In the eighteen-eighties, Frank Harris and Bernard Shaw were young men living by their literary wits in London. When Harris became owner and editor of *The Saturday Review*, he invited Shaw to be his theatre critic; Shaw's brilliant and provocative pieces for that paper made his name and gave him confidence to go on to playwriting. Harris was a loudmouthed vulgarian, a womanizer, and a man of few scruples, especially where money was concerned. He tried his hand at various enterprises—a life of Oscar Wilde, a restaurant on the

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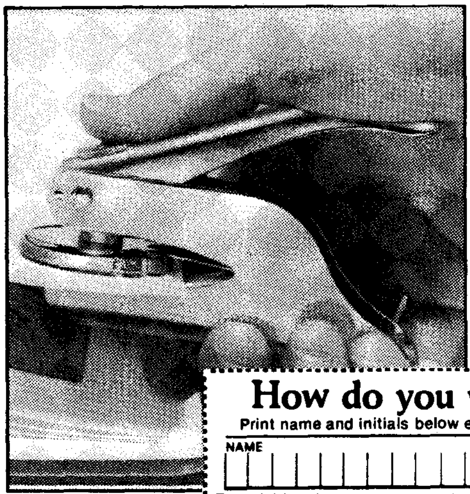
Riviera, a scabrous autobiography, and, it was said, a few little flyers in blackmail—but he always ended up broke. He appealed to his old protégé to help him out, by writing prefaces, free, for his books, and by collaborating with him on literary schemes. Shaw, who was willfully blind to some of Harris's more egregious faults—he called Harris, to his face, a "buccaneer" and a "ruffian"—did what he could for him, out of the kindness of the heart that he tried so hard to make the world believe was nonexistent. This exchange of letters spans thirty-five years, ending with Harris's death, in 1931, and in it are reflected the literary and political transition from Victoria's day to modern times and a human drama in which tragedy and farce are completely intermixed.

BERNARD SHAW AND ALFRED DOUGLAS: A CORRESPONDENCE, edited by Mary Hyde (Ticknor & Fields; $25). Another exchange of letters between Shaw and a literary has-been. Shaw met Lord Alfred Douglas—Oscar Wilde's Bosie, and the source of his grievous troubles—in 1895, at a lunch with Wilde and Frank Harris. He never saw him again, but thirty-six years later, when Douglas had run through his money, had lost his startling good looks and the lyric gift that once commanded admiration from the best critics of English poetry, had been converted to Catholicism and an unpleasant, moralizing kind of political conservatism, and had milked dry the notoriety of his association with Wilde, Shaw got a letter from him asking that he write a preface to Douglas's autobiography, to give a fillip to the book's American sales. Shaw turned him down but, curiously, didn't shut him off: a correspondence began, which lasted until Douglas died, in 1945, at seventy-four. The two, who take to addressing each other as St. Christopher and Childe Alfred, rake up the old Wilde scandal and subject it to the most minute scrutiny; they discuss Frank Harris, and the part he played in the once flourishing business of exploiting Oscar Wilde; they quarrel; they chew over the evergreen question of the identity of the W.H. of Shakespeare's sonnets; they comment spiritedly on everything in sight—doctors, latter-day poets, Hitler, publishers, war, politicians. It makes for a lively show, and puts Lord Alfred, for all



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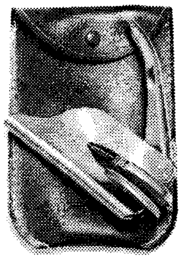

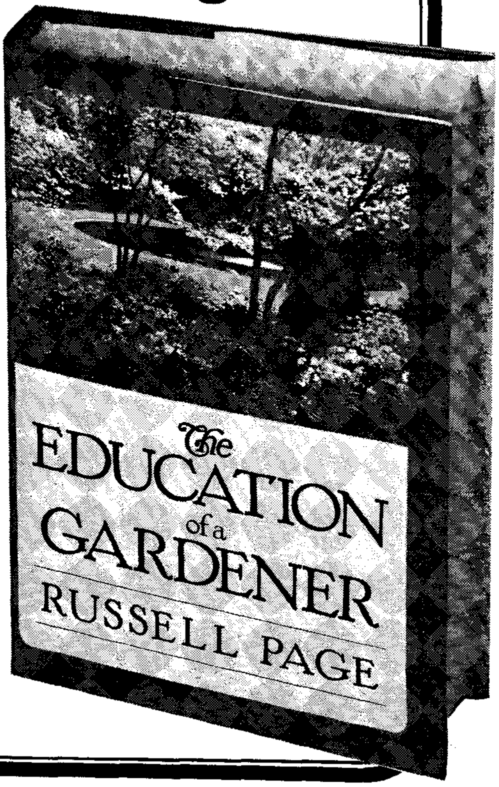

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his whining and self-pity, in a better light than usual. As for Shaw, it is another testament to his generosity that he could spend so much time and energy in solacing a badly disappointed man.

FURY ON EARTH: A BIOGRAPHY OF WILHELM REICH, by Myron Sharaf (St. Martin's; $24.95). This account of the Austrian-born psychoanalyst (1897-1957), who died in a federal prison, enables the reader to appreciate Reich's creativity and his contributions to contemporary clinical practice, and shows how his arrogance led to his expulsion from the Communist Party, in 1933; his exclusion from the International Psychoanalytic Association, in 1934; and his conviction for defying an injunction of the Food and Drug Administration, in 1956. Reich was born to an unhappy family and to wealth; both vanished in the First World War, leaving the young medical student to make his way in Vienna, where his gifts won him Freud's approval. Reich's ideas (such as a "muscular armor" neurotics don to defend themselves), his queries (about the importance of nonverbal communication in therapy), and his concerns (making psychoanalysis socially and politically fruitful) were forward-looking. By the mid-nineteen-thirties, his theories had broadened to include fields such as biochemistry and electrobiology, and in the United States in the nineteen-forties they culminated in the belief that he could harness the healing powers of cosmic radiation by means of "orgone energy collectors"—cell-like boxes that he designed and rented to patients. The F.D.A. denied the collectors' therapeutic value. Mr. Sharaf, a psychologist who worked with Reich, does not feel scientifically qualified to judge Reich's biological and physical theories but regrets that no researcher has attempted to duplicate his elaborate experiments. Whatever readers make of Reich's ideas, Mr. Sharaf's detail and candor are compelling; the biography brings us into the presence of a temperament impressive for its passion, its fecund imagination, and its astounding lack of judgment.

NOTE: "In Suspect Terrain," John McPhee's further account of "doing geology"—this time across the Appalachian Range from New Jersey to Indiana—has been published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux ($12.95).

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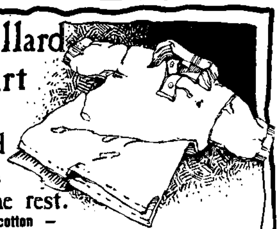

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All the contents originally appeared in *The New Yorker.* . . . Elizabeth Bishop's "The Complete Poems: 1927-1979," some of which, too, first appeared here, has been published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux ($17.50).

MYSTERY AND CRIME

STICK, by Elmore Leonard (Arbor House; $14.50). Stick is Ernest Stickley, forty-two, born in Oklahoma, just released from prison in Michigan after serving seven years for armed robbery, and arrived now in Miami, determined to survive but go straight. Through a onetime prison friend, he finds himself involved with a company of high-flyers—all of them rich, all of them smart, some of them (or, rather, their retainers) very dangerous—and from them he begins to learn that money is a better weapon than a pistol when it comes to making easy money. Stick, like all Mr. Leonard's unheroic heroes, is entirely himself—three-dimensional. He jumps right off the page, and his story (populated by real people struggling in a real, if unsavory, world) is sharply written, and as shapely as a sonata. It's a fine book.

DEADLINES, by Desmond Ryan (Norton; $15.50). The difficult unmasking of a crooked congressman by a relentless newspaper reporter. The scene (somewhat unusual in contemporary fiction) is Philadelphia (where Mr. Ryan, whose first novel this is, works as film critic on the *Inquirer*) and the environs of a paper called the *Times-Herald*—a tottering conservative paper with a dying owner, a new, bottom-line executive editor, and a new, highly sophisticated computer system. Everything is well done—the character of the reporter, the quality of his reporting, the complexity of the politician's scam, and the nature of the politician himself. There are a couple of more or less irrelevant girls. The reporter is a real newspaper hero, triumphing over not only a powerful consortium but his own craven employers, yet he has to share honors with the computer, and even with the hero of "Tosca."

•

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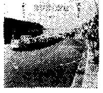

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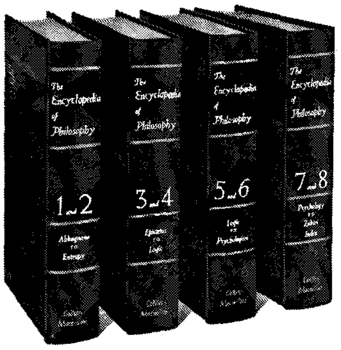

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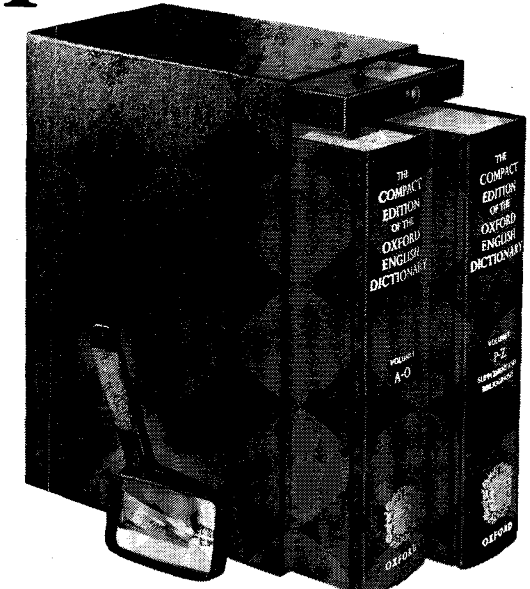

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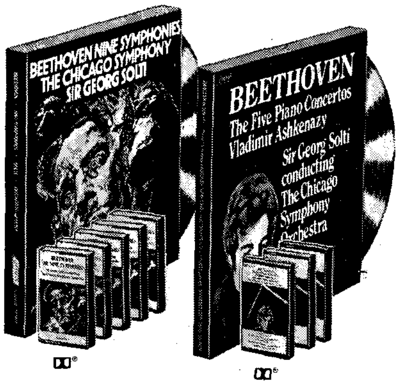

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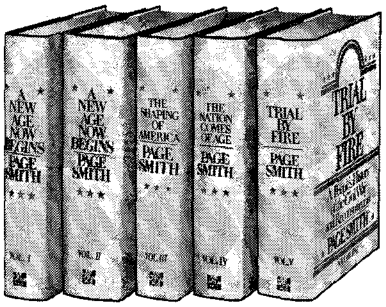

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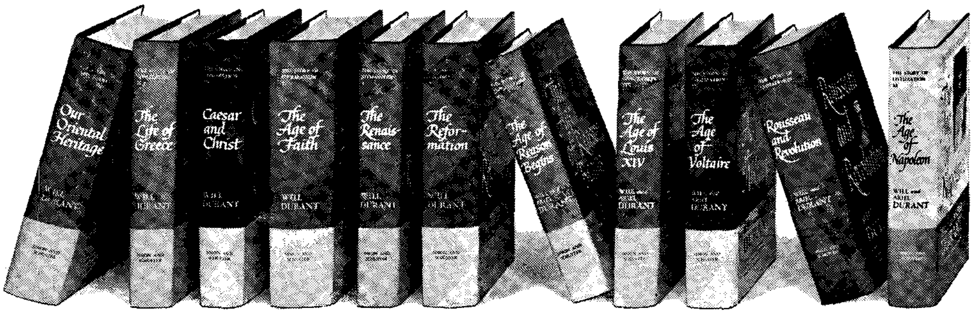

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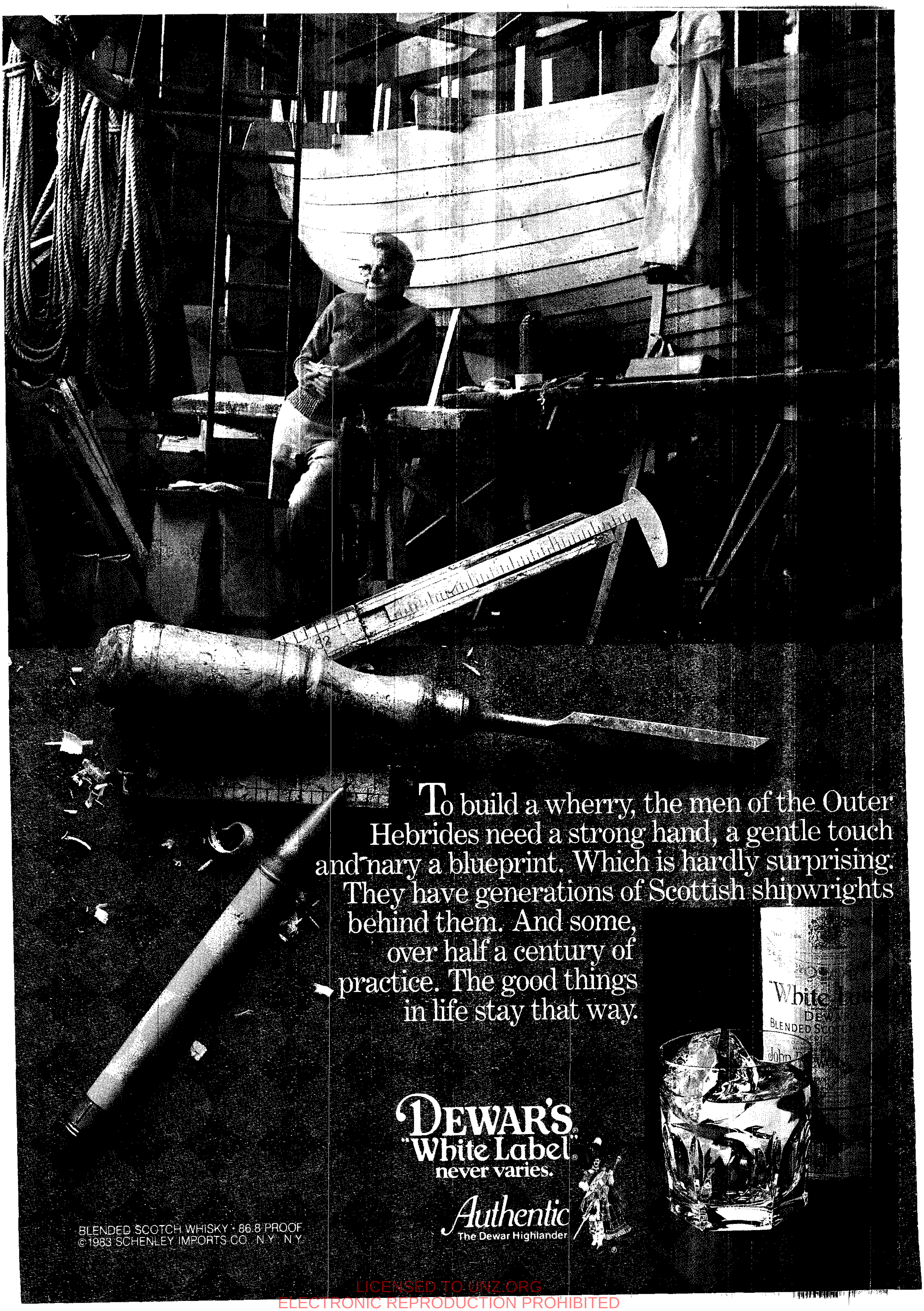

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